MOSCOW CELEBRATES: Alexander Werth

THE NATION

1865 Centennial Year 1965

JUNE 7, 1965 . . 35c

Our Enemy at Home

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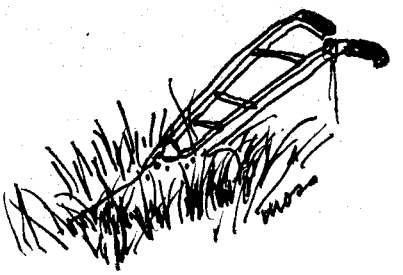
Poverty

The Identity, Distribution and Disabilities of 34 Million Americans: An Analysis of Man's Oldest Problem and Recommendations for Its Elimination



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Edith Sitwell

DENISE LEVERTOV

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LETTERS

The relevant Left

Berkeley, Calif.

Dear Sirs: You deserve the subscribers' thanks for having put Jack Newfield on the student politics assignment ("The Student Left," *The Nation*, May 10). Newfield is to be thanked for extending his range to an audience which rarely gets an internal perspective on "leftism. . . ."

Some emendations: It is a mistake, though sometimes a useful mistake, to define this New Left by its heroes and outcasts. For example, its Berkeley instance is more tolerant of the "Pop" and "Old" fringes than Newfield suggests—everyone is welcome so far as they contribute to the vague, common program, and ignored so far as they don't (viz., the so-called "Filthy Speech Movement"); conversely, heroes are such in virtue of their utility and ignored when irrelevant (viz., Paul Goodman, who has become irrelevant). . . .

These young radicals . . . are not apolitical, as *The New Republic* would have it, only uncompromisingly opposed to *easy* politics, the politics of form without content, titles (Alliance for Progress, War on Poverty, Peace Corps) without earnestness. . . .

David McCullough

General Hester

Providence, R.I.

Dear Sirs: Gen. Hugh B. Hester is not only one of the foremost authorities on present conditions in Europe but he is also a well-informed and discerning writer generally, and his views ought to receive more attention than they do. His letter in your May 3 issue is especially pertinent. He is quite right in excepting to Lippmann's inaccurate description of West Germany as "liberal and democratic," and he is equally sound in urging the recognition—*de facto*, of course—of the East German Republic.

Marc T. Greene

Caricature of Weil

New York City

Dear Sirs: Paul West speaks well of my book on Simone Weil (*The Nation*, Apr. 19). Would that he did equal justice to Simone Weil! The extent to which he seems *not* to have understood her is most depressing: A few examples:

(1) ". . . As Gustave Thibon and others noted, she winced away from physical embraces—at least until the day she forced herself to declare with rather dotty braggadocio, 'I like being kissed by men with mustaches. It stings!' "

Paul West does not realize—what I thought was clearly indicated by the context—that this was the *mot d'enfant* of a 6- or 8-year-old.

(2) He is shocked that a "human being" could have written the following utterance: "To the degree to which affliction is hideous, so is its true expression supremely beautiful. . . ."

Either Paul West does not realize that Simone Weil was actually saying: "To the degree to which affliction is hideous in actuality, so is its true expression in art supremely beautiful," or else he is forgetting about the *Iliad*, Dante's *Inferno*, *King Lear*, etc. . . .

(3) He leaps to the defense of joy: "A determined enough mind, like hers, can eventually prove that a child's laughter is a piece of evil and that, because pain is *not* always bad and degrading and impersonal, we should all be lining up for our ration of cancer or arthritis. . . . I find something monstrous in Simone Weil, something that doesn't respect an ordinary human joy."

But Simone Weil's respect for human joy was equal to her respect for human pain. She writes in *Waiting on God* (Routledge, p. 75): "Through joy, the beauty of the world penetrates our soul." A philosopher is concerned with problems; and pain, not joy, is what creates problems. . . .

By stressing the negative aspects in Simone Weil's personality, and this often on purely gratuitous grounds and on assumptions, Paul West has drawn a gross caricature. . . .

Jacques Cabaud
Fordham University

Tax sit-in

Las Vegas, Nev.

Dear Sirs: Since letters, marches, proclamations of protest have all proved futile, I have decided at the very least that I shall no longer help *finance* Johnson's war, and have therefore informed the Internal Revenue Bureau, via the White House, that payment of my income tax for 1964 will not be made until the killing stops in both North and South Vietnam.

Edward Abbey

Other rocking chair

New York City

Dear Sirs: Suppose Mao should copy President Johnson's statement and substitute the word Communists for capitalists. It would then read as follows: "We don't propose to sit here in our rocking chair with our hands folded and let the capitalists set up any government in the Eastern Hemisphere."

Marks S. Shaine, M.D.

THE NATION

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The Nation, June 7, 1965. Vol. 200, No. 23

The Nation is published weekly (except in July and August, when biweekly) by The Nation Company and copyright 1965 in the U.S.A. by the Nation Associates, Inc., 333 Sixth Avenue, New York, N.Y., 10014. Second class postage paid at New York, N.Y. Tel.: CH 2-8400.

Subscription Price: One year, $10; two years, $18. Foreign and Canadian postage: $1 extra per year.

Change of Address: Three weeks' notice is required for change of address, which cannot be made without the old address as well as the new.

Information to Libraries: The Nation is indexed in Readers Guide to Periodical Literature, Book Review Digest and the Public Affairs Information Service.

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Negotiate or Discuss

On the May 23 N.B.C. television and radio "Meet the Press" program, Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, our official spokesman on Vietnam in Europe and Asia, was asked some significant questions and gave some significant answers. When Robert Kleiman of *The New York Times* asked about a diplomatic approach, Lodge replied that it was not excluded, but "I think we're nowhere near that stage. And I think we might very well never come to negotiations."

In subsequent answers Lodge referred to "unconditional discussions," thus detouring around "negotiations." The latter term came into the broadcast when Lawrence Spivak, the moderator, quoted a Lodge statement from a *U.S. News & World Report* story of February: "I think a conference now would be disastrous," and asked: "Do you think it would be disastrous today to have negotiations on Vietnam?" Lodge replied: "Oh, yes, I think it would be the equivalent of turning South Vietnam over to the wolves. . . ." Spivak came back: "Well, what point then is there for the Administration to offer to negotiate?" Lodge: "The Administration has offered unconditional discussions. . . ." Spivak: "But if they accepted our invitation to negotiate you would be against it?" Lodge: "If they accepted our invitation to discuss, Mr. Spivak. I don't need to tell you the difference between discussion and negotiating. If they accepted our invitation to discuss and it meant that they had a change of heart, then of course it would be worth doing."

The President's Johns Hopkins speech, and subsequent utterances featuring the word "unconditional," have left a majority of the American people convinced that "they" were bent on war *à outrance*, while we were pleading for them to come to the conference table. A minority of the American people was suspended in doubt: the President had left himself several loopholes in that he ruled out any communication with the Vietcong and, contrary to the terms of the 1954 Geneva convention which we had agreed to respect, appeared to contemplate an indefinite separation of North and South Vietnam. Ambassador Lodge confirmed these suspicions on May 23. We do not wish to negotiate until the enemy manifests a "change of heart," i.e., indicates willingness to settle on our terms, which would involve turning South Vietnam into a kind of South Korea, with the Vietnamese equivalent of a Syngman Rhee or a General Park as our viceroy.

This would be convenient for the Johnson Administration, but it is hard to see why either Peking or Hanoi should accept it. We reserve the right to mete out punishment to Hanoi for giving help to their side in the Vietnamese civil war, while our far greater assistance to our side is pictured as the quintessence of international morality. The President has stigmatized China, by name, as the villain in the whole drama, and shows every sign of preparing for a major war in pursuit of a China policy which has become indistinguishable from that of John Foster Dulles in the past or Barry Goldwater in the present. We will not negotiate until we are in a position to do so on behalf of a clearly viable South Vietnamese regime, and until the military advantage is so clearly on our side that we will hold all the high cards in the deck.

Apparently this is what the Johnson Administration has had in mind all along, speeches and press briefings to the contrary notwithstanding. It is altogether possible that what Ambassador Lodge had to say will be "explained" by Mr. Rusk, or even rejected as a misinterpretation of policy. But it is hard to believe that Mr. Lodge, who probably knows as much about American policy in Vietnam as anyone outside the close circle of the President's advisers, did not know whereof he spoke. Nor has Mr. Lodge's candor and clarity made it any easier for informed citizens to take seriously what the Administration has to say in justification of its foreign policies.

Time for Decision

The present American policy in Vietnam is based on the hope that as military pressure is increased the Hanoi government, lacking substantial assistance from Peking or Moscow, will have no option but to discontinue its assistance to the Vietcong, which the United States can then dispose of at leisure. This possibility, seductive as it may be to Mr. Johnson, is exceedingly remote. By all indications the situation will at best remain static, and more probably will worsen. If so, Mr. Johnson's personal position will also deteriorate, since he will be receiving military advice even more dubious than that which has led him into his present troubles, yet he may by then have no choice but to act on it.

The air assaults on North Vietnam have not brought about the magic capitulation that was sought. The services were eager to try their weapons systems, and they have now had three months of combat flying, with little success. They bomb, their losses are moderate, they destroy bridges and military installations; but we are no nearer winning the war than we were when our efforts were confined to the South.

Our sole superiority is in the air, and that advantage is about to be severely attenuated. The monsoon is coming. "In about two weeks time," the New York *Herald Tribune* said editorially, "nature will become an ally of the Communists and will be doing something which they have not as yet been able to do

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themselves—interfere with American and South Vietnamese air operations." What will the Vietcong and their allies up north be doing during this surcease? The monsoon will not interfere with American air operations in the north as much as in the central and southern portions of South Vietnam, and it is there that we must expect intensified enemy action. The Vietcong may move in force against Danang, and the skirmishes there may grow to battles of considerable size. Or they may try to cut central Vietnam in two; they have already interrupted north-south transport several times in several places.

American counteraction is being planned, but the estimates seem grossly inadequate in the light of past experience. The same people who were touting air strikes as the key to victory are now blandly reverting to conventional warfare. More Marine and Army divisions are to be committed, we shall try to establish an impregnable line of resistance across the peninsula, then fight "backwards," simultaneously enlarging perimeters around the ports in an effort to clean up the Vietcong over most of the country. This will require "several" divisions, according to planners who have proved so optimistic in the past. More realistic estimates run up to 500,000 troops. Such a diversion, or anything like it, would jeopardize our far-flung commitments elsewhere—in Korea, in Europe, in Latin America. One reason why our European allies are nervous is that they see the possibility of American overextension. In World War II there was always an internal conflict between the commanders in the European theatre of operations and those in Asia; something of the sort is in prospect again.

Does this deserve the name of a strategy? Mr. Johnson would be far more prudent to forget his fear that he may be shamed by the Goldwater faction and to initiate negotiations without further experimentation. The aim should be not to remain militarily on the mainland of Asia, but to get out as soon as possible and with as much dignity as possible. De Gaulle did it in Algeria and he is scarcely a political corpse. If Mr. Johnson is as concerned as he says he is about his place in history, now is the time for him to pause, reflect, and act as a sober statesman. It may be his last chance.

Business Is Booming

In the February 1 issue *The Nation* pointed out editorially that the seemingly moderate defense budget did not tell all about the military activities of our peace-loving country. Among the corps of assistants who help to make Robert McNamara our best Secretary of Defense since James Forrestal, the deputy assistant secretary for international logistic negotiations is not the least important. The incumbent is Henry J. Kuss, Jr., and his job is to arrange sales of American-made arms to selected foreign governments. In the industry publication *Aerospace*, Mr. Kuss disclosed that our military exports had increased from $0.5 billion in 1960 to $3 billion between November, 1962, and November, 1964, and he predicted a rise to $5.4 billion annually by 1967. The aerospace industry was assured that half or more of future orders would be in its field of endeavor, which was certainly not bad news.

According to Jack Raymond, writing in the May 24 *New York Times*, U.S. arms sales are now running at the rate of $1.5 billion a year and we have become the biggest arms merchant in the world. When, between the two World Wars, the Nye committee started a furore against "merchants of death," it did not understand how important the arms industry would become to the American economy and to the safeguarding of peace by American military power—whether exerted directly or through the sale of arms to countries regarded as friendly. Sometimes, as in the case of Indonesia, the friendship may prove to be only temporary; and there are other drawbacks, the principal one being that Britain and France, our staunch NATO allies, are in the arms-manufacture business themselves, and their businessmen need the money even more than ours do. Right on the British and French doorsteps, the United States maintains a $500,000-a-year sales-promotion program, and one British military commentator has complained that we have pressured the West Germans into buying American arms inferior to those produced in Britain. Some of the waspish remarks about U.S. policy in the French and British press, and perhaps even General de Gaulle's animadversions, may well have their origin in resentment at American competition in the world arms market.

The Johnson Administration feels that these recriminations are groundless. While selling $1.5 billion a year, we have denied ourselves another $0.5 billion in sales for high moral or political reasons. Our exports help to redress the balance-of-payments deficit, however unappetizing the merchandise. Mr. McNamara has given arms salesmanship a priority status at the Pentagon and bestowed his Meritorious Civilian Service Medal on Mr. Kuss, whose energy and zeal, according to the citation, have "assisted in a unique fashion to develop the military export-sales program and other significant logistic efforts." In the land of free enterprise the go-getter, unlike the prophet, is not without honor.

Some of the sales are to a third party, with the ostensible buyer acting as a go-between. U.S. arms sales to Israel, for instance, went through West Germany, as Egypt's Nasser discovered to his chagrin and to the embarrassment of the West Germans. The Bonn correspondent of *The Economist* (February 20) reports that, aside from aid to Israel, the 1965 West German federal budget provides about £15 million in military aid to Ethiopia, Guinea, India, Libya, Malagasy, Nigeria, Pakistan, Somalia and other countries. The arms come out of Bundeswehr stocks, which in turn are replenished by Germany's allies, in particular the United States. Underdeveloped and overdeveloped countries alike are ravenous for arms; total

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world expenditures run to about $135 billion a year. Mr. Kuss's munitions business is thriving, but there is the one flaw in it: it may blow up at the very zenith of prosperity.

The Citizen as Activist

Citizens in the fifty states of the union owe a large if unacknowledged debt to those few who take the Bill of Rights seriously enough to insist on invoking it in their own behalf and, by this insistence, protect and even enlarge the rights of all citizens. Several current examples warrant comment. Corliss Lamont, of New York, and Leif Heilberg, of San Francisco, have just won their separate court challenges to the constitutionality of an amendment to the Postal Service and Federal Employees Salary Act of 1962, under which the Post Office undertook to force addressees to sign a card indicating their willingness to receive from a foreign country mail that had been characterized under the regulations as "Communist political propaganda" (because of the source). Originally, the addressee could receive such mail by agreeing to the inclusion of his name on a standing list of those willing to receive "Communist political propaganda" — tantamount to requesting that one's name be added to a blacklist. A later procedure required, for each single piece of mail characterized as "Communist political propaganda," a statement from the addressee that he wished to receive it.

This regulation has now been declared unconstitutional by the Supreme Court in a decision that enlarges the rights of all citizens under the First Amendment. What Mr. Justice Douglas found offensive about the regulation was the "affirmative obligation" it sought to place on the addressee; in his view, this obligation was bound to have a "deterrent effect, especially as respects those who hold sensitive positions." Justices Brennan and Goldberg, concurring, stressed the proposition that the protection of the Bill of Rights goes beyond the specific guarantees "to protect from Congressional abridgment those equally fundamental personal rights necessary to make the express guarantees fully meaningful." And the concurring opinion points out further that "the right to receive publications is such a fundamental right. The dissemination of ideas can accomplish nothing if otherwise willing addressees are not free to receive and consider them. It would be a barren market place of ideas that had only sellers and no buyers." Equally important is the suggestion that "inhibition as well as prohibition against the exercise of precious First Amendment rights is a power denied to government."

Every citizen should be grateful to Messrs. Lamont and Heilberg, to their counsel and to the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee and the American Civil Liberties Union for their help on the appeals. Another "activist" who merits a vote of thanks is Harvey O'Connor. After winning one bout with the House Un-American Activities Committee, Mr. O'Connor was subpoenaed a second time—for the offense of addressing a rally called by the Emergency Civil Liberties Committee against HUAC. This time his counsel (Leonard Boudin and Morton Stavis) subpoenaed the production of all HUAC records, both public and confidential, relating to O'Connor and the ECLC. HUAC tried, but failed, to have the subpoena quashed; it then elected to dismiss the contempt proceeding against O'Connor. By demonstrating that both parties —pursuer and pursued—can play the subpoena game, Citizen O'Connor has scored a significant if minor breakthrough in the endless war against HUAC.

MOSCOW CELEBRATES . . . . . Alexander Werth

Paris

In the Tupolov-114 jet bringing me back from Moscow after the fortnight I had spent there attending the Victory over Germany celebrations, I sat next to a young man, a member of the Moscow Music Hall company which is now performing at the Paris Olympia. The aircraft was crowded with other young men and with particularly atttractive Russian girls, and the baggage racks were loaded with guitars, balalaikas and other instruments. "You wouldn't remember the war," I said to my neighbor. "Oh yes, I do," he said. "I was 7 when it ended; my mother and I lived in Moscow, and potatoes and bread were practically all we had to eat. But my dad was an airman, and he came frequently from the front to visit us. He would bring us cans of Spam and packets of American lard, and we would fry the bread in this lard, and that was really great!" "And where is your father now?" "He was killed in April, 1945, two weeks before the end of the war. It was the damnedest piece of luck. I still fondly remember that American Spam; they were our Allies then; but what the hell are they trying to do now? Do they really want a third World War?"

There is scarcely a family in Russia that has not some war memories at least as poignant. Until recently, the Russians were cagey about the actual number of people they lost in the war. Now they openly say that whereas the United States, Britain and France lost, in one way or another, a few hundred thousand people each, the Soviet Union lost in World War II more than 20 million people. So the extraordinary celebrations of the twentieth anniversary of V-E Day in Moscow were both a commemorative ceremony to honor those who had died in the war and a self-congratulatory ceremony to celebrate the great postwar reconstruction and economic progress. The ceremonies were also intended as a special tribute to the army.

Almost all the great war leaders of the Red army were present, their

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dazzling uniforms covered with dozens of medals and decorations: Marshals Zhukov, Konev, Rokossovsky, Sokolovsky, Timoshenko, Malinovsky (the war minister), and even some of the old war horses, like Budenny, still sporting that legendary mustache and looking remarkably spry despite his 82 years. The presence of Zhukov, in disgrace under Khrushchev since 1957, aroused particular interest. It is rumored that he is writing his extraordinarily candid memoirs on World War II, but these, it is said, will not be published for many years yet—perhaps not until after his death. (He is 69 now.)

The marshals all appeared, with Brezhnev, Kosygin and the other members of the "collective leadership," on top of the Lenin Mausoleum in the Red Square at the Victory Day parade. The parade disappointed many: it was a marchpast by all kinds of young troops in impeccable new uniforms, whereas it had been widely hoped that some of the famous regiments now composed of war veterans, and perhaps even some veterans of the guerrilla war, would parade through the square. After the troops came tanks, and still more tanks, and various other formidable vehicles; then an even more formidable display of all kinds of rockets, bigger and bigger and bigger. And the general reaction was: "Hope to heaven we never have to use these damned things."

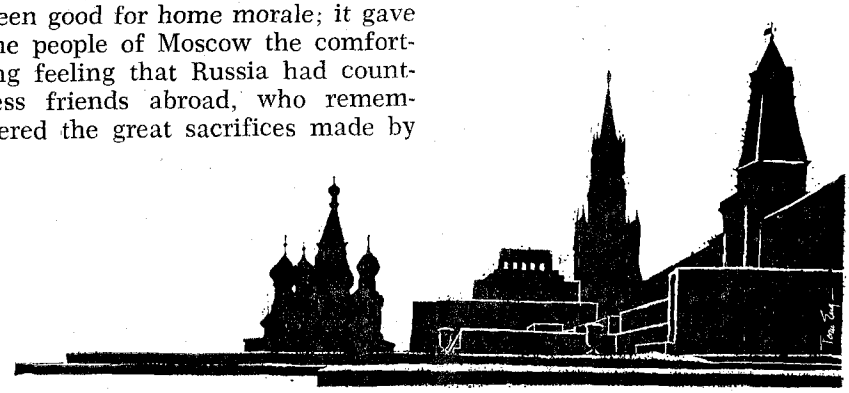
The marshals were again in force at the great Kremlin reception that followed. Here one saw all the important people of the regime, the cream of Soviet science and literature, and even (believe it or not) the leaders of the Orthodox Church, headed by the 85-year-old patriarch (the only man who, in view of his age, was given a chair to sit on!), and a couple of mullahs and rabbis.

It had been thought important to give the celebrations of the twentieth anniversary of V-E Day a certain international character; hence the International Congress of War Veterans of World War II. Once more the ceremonies were presided over by the marshals—the president of the Congress was Marshal Timoshenko, and on the platform were Zhukov, Rokossovsky, Sokolovsky, Konev and others. Interesting papers were read by several of them on some of the principal battles of the Soviet-German front, and in every speech there were warm references to the great anti-Hitler coalition that had lasted long enough to save the world from Nazi tyranny. A discreetly worded resolution, adopted at the end, condemned war and aggression and exalted the blessings of peace.

This Congress of War Veterans moved me to somewhat mixed feelings. Among the British delegation there were not only real heroes of World War II (even one Captain James Price of Cardiff, a wonderful old boy covered with crosses and medals, who had lost a leg in 1915) but also various elderly ladies from some vague peace societies. The United States delegation was very small; much more impressive was the French group, consisting not only of leading members of the Resistance but also of the airmen of the Normandy squadrons who had fought in 1943-45 on the Russian front at de Gaulle's initiative (the greater part of them lost their lives). There were also anti-Nazis from both Western and Eastern Germany, including an 85-year-old Hohenzollern princess; Resistance leaders from Italy, Denmark, Norway and dozens of other countries, particularly from Poland, Czechoslovakia, Yugoslavia, etc. There were a few Vietnamese, but nobody from Albania or China.

All these people, some 200 delegates, had been brought to Moscow as guests of the Soviet Government, and were kept in great comfort at the Moskva Hotel. But one of the organizers of the Congress later told me that, despite the trouble and expense, results had been disappointing. It was being treated abroad as a "Russian propaganda stunt," and even *L'Humanité* and other Communist papers abroad had said little about it. He added, however, that the Congress had been good for home morale; it gave the people of Moscow the comforting feeling that Russia had countless friends abroad, who remembered the great sacrifices made by the Russian people in the common victory against Germany; and who were acutely worried about America's new foreign and military policy, and did not hesitate to say so. I think that the organizers of the Congress overrated its effect, but it was an understandable psychological error, with something rather pathetic about it: to the Russians, World War II is still very real; to most other countries (possibly excepting Yugoslavia and Poland), it has become a distant memory.

I had been in Russia last August — only nine months ago — but some of the changes since then are striking. I doubt that there are any regrets about Khrushchev. People now openly tell you—it was already whispered last summer—that the country had become thoroughly fed up with him. Above all, it was disgusted by his hopeless mismanagement of agriculture, on which he fancied himself a super-expert. The public was tired of his "exhibitionism," of his pictures and interminable speeches that filled the press; of his irresponsible handling of Cuba which nearly brought on World War III; of his nepotism, vulgarity and lack of dignity. And although he is credited with opening the camps and with having started de-Stalinization in a big way, many now wonder whether he did not mishandle de-Stalinization too. Did he not overdo it in his impulsive way by, for instance, telling patently untrue stories about Stalin as a war leader? In recent articles and speeches by the principal Russian generals, the evaluation of Stalin as a war leader is, on the whole, much more favorable than it was in Khrushchev's stories. The line now is that, on balance, and notwithstanding his failure to take obviously indicated precautions in the summer of 1941, Stalin was a good war leader; but



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that the 1936-38 purges were monstrous, and that from 1947 on he was "scarcely normal." Nobody mentions "Volgograd" today; it is called Stalingrad again; and I should not be surprised if it were renamed officially. On the other hand, there is much criticism of Khrushchev's attempt to build himself up as a major war leader. When I mentioned this to one of the marshals, he merely grinned.

The usual wisecrack about Khrushchev is: "There was 'cult,' but no 'personality.'" Now, some of the cynics say — and the Russians have become a little cynical about their leaders — "there is neither cult, nor personality." But this generalization should not be taken too seriously. No doubt, as everybody prophesies, a "boss" will gradually emerge; but for the present it is better that there should be none, and that the members of the party hierarchy should watch one another carefully so that none of them *does* come out on top. My impression is that Brezhnev, and especially Kosygin, are respected as highly competent men, with a vast technological machine under them, and that the system is working more effectively than it did under Khrushchev's constant improvisations and scatterbrained ideas. As one party leader put it to me: "The Plenary Meeting of the Central Committee last March was unique in its own way; out of nineteen of the principal speakers, only five talked blah; all the others dealt with hard economic facts and figures."

There are several other important changes. Some major concessions have been made to the peasantry: they have far greater freedom for developing their "individual plots," complete with cows and pigs, on which they will no longer have to pay the high taxes levied under Khrushchev. Housing continues to develop at a fantastic rate in Moscow and other cities. Twice during this visit I lost my way when looking up old friends I had seen last summer, so numerous are the houses and streets built in the outlying parts of Moscow during the last year. Older parts of Moscow are also being pulled down, and many of the new buildings, made of glass and concrete, have an extraordinarily modern European look.

It is still too early to say how much liberalization is going on in the arts and in literature. Ilya Ehrenburg still feels keenly the attacks made on him by Khrushchev and ideological chief Ilyichev back in 1963, but the publication of his memoirs has now been resumed in *Novy Mir*. All the same, he was rather grumpy and disheartened when I visited with him, and he has aged a lot. The recent dismissal of Ilyichev from his job of arbiter of the arts on the Central

Committee and his replacement by Demichev, an apparently much milder character, have occasioned unanimous rejoicing among the intellectuals and writers.

The "liberal" writers damned by Khrushchev in 1963 have come into their own again. Victor Nekrasov is in favor; there is an enormously long poem by Yevtushenko in the latest issue of *Yunost*, and Voznesensky has turned some of his recent poems into an extraordinarily *avant-garde* theatrical show: jumping and gesticulating figures, their black silhouettes strikingly reflected against a red background, recite and chant his poems to the accompaniment of guitars and rock'n'roll music. The poems themselves cover a vast range of subjects and moods—some of them depressingly pessimistic and atomically catastrophic. "Ordinary" Russians have called the show a "dog's delirium," but the more sophisticated young people love it. In any case, the fact that such a show is possible in Moscow at all is enormously significant.

What can one add to what Brezhnev and Kosygin and Gromyko have already said about Russia's foreign policy? They have "warned and warned and warned" the United States about Vietnam; Brezhnev recalled the "sacred duty" Russia had to help North Vietnam, adding that Washington should make no mistake about it. There is an uncomfortable feeling in Moscow that the Pentagon is using unhappy Vietnam as a testing ground for all sorts of unspeakably beastly new weapons, possibly to prove that guerrilla war is helpless against this advanced technology. It is scarcely denied that the Americans may ultimately succeed in "proving" this. And what then?

The one thing of which the Russians are absolutely certain is that, what with Vietnam and the Dominican Republic, the United States is rapidly becoming the most generally detested country throughout the Afro-Asian world, and will shortly be as heartily loathed throughout Latin America. Moreover, in the world at large, and not least in Western Europe, United States foreign policy is arousing a wave of anxiety and resentment. This alarm, it is thought, is becoming so broad and so intense that it may not be necessary for Russia to intervene in a major war in Vietnam. Is this only an alibi? The Russians are certainly eager to avoid large-scale participation in Vietnam, if only because they fear it may be China's number one device for bringing about a war between Russia and the United States.

I observed among ordinary people in Russia—as I did last summer—a sharp dislike of Africans who, when in Russia, tend to behave insolently and arrogantly, and to attribute any rebuffs to "Russian radicalism" (many of these Africans belong to the ruling castes of their own countries). I noticed, further, an acute distrust of the Chinese. The firing of Khrushchev may have been at least partly determined by the impasse he got into through his uncompromising Chinese policy, but Soviet-Chinese relations are not much better under the new regime. The extreme cordiality shown to Mr. Shastri and other Indian visitors, and the large increase of Russian aid to India, can be regarded as an anti-Chinese demonstration. Above all, perhaps, there is growing resentment that the Chinese, who expected Russia to take enormous risks over Vietnam, have done "nothing at all"

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up to now to help the Vietnamese.

Russia today is undoubtedly a going concern—you have only to look at the major economic figures quoted in Brezhnev's latest speech (e.g., 85 million tons of steel today as against 18 million tons in 1940) to realize the strides at which it is advancing. Agriculture, it is true, is still in a mess, but since Khrushchev's departure some important measures have at last been taken to clear it up. Food conditions are already better than they were last year — partly because of a better harvest in 1964. It is still too early to say how long it will take to get agriculture into good working order; Brezhnev is reported to be dissatisfied with the rate of progress, and there have even been rumors (so far unsubstantiated) that like others in the past he is finding it too big a job, and may even resign. But, by and large, the country moves forward.

The last thing in the world the Russians want is to risk all they have built in a nuclear showdown. My own guess is that they will be content to let the Americans make fools and beasts of themselves (especially in the eyes of the colored people of the world) in the Far East until American opinion itself rebels against the present policy—as it finally rebelled against the war in Korea. What aid they give Vietnam will be limited, and not likely to involve them in war.

Europe is a very different story. On the potential danger of U.S.-aided German aggression, Russia expresses the strongest and most unanimous feeling. Any attempt by the United States to change the *status quo* in Europe by force may simply mean war. The Russians are willing to discuss a future settlement of Europe on the lines proposed by General de Gaulle; they will not be intimidated by any American threats to put an end to "the shame of Eastern Germany." To the Russians, Vietnam is not a matter of life and death—at least for the present—but Germany is.

And what would happen if the Americans invaded Cuba? I put this question to numerous Russians, and received highly contradictory answers. Some stated categorically that it would mean World War III; others remarked with a touch of disgust that Russia might back down over Cuba, as in 1938 France and Britain backed down over Czechoslovakia; there might be a fearful temptation to yield to the bullying of the "Pentagon Hitlers." But that would merely mean putting off the evil hour for a year or two. In some Russian eyes we are back in a 1937-38 situation, with Vietnam being likened to the Spanish testing ground for new weapons, and Cuba a new kind of Czechoslovakia which might — or might not—produce a new Munich. Needless to say, what has been happening in Santo Domingo has greatly increased the anxiety in Russia (and not only in Russia) as to the future of Cuba.

What struck me most during these Victory Day celebrations was the warmth with which so many eminent Russians spoke of the time when Russia, Britain and the United States were Allies. There is a longing for Russo-American coexistence, as it prevailed in 1959; but, as Brezhnev said, a bilateral Soviet-American coexistence, much as the Russians would like it, will be impossible if all kinds of American wars rage in so many other parts of the globe.

Many in Moscow were prophesying some extremely dangerous developments for this autumn, after the end of the rainy season in Southeast Asia. Some thought that the Chinese had a big surprise in store.

POVERTY: OUR ENEMY AT HOME

The Historical Approach . . . . Robert J. Lampman

Greek democracy, Roman law and Judeo-Christian ethics give us basic directives for all questions of social policy, but the specific character of the anti-poverty measures now under public discussion in America can best be understood as the extension of responses associated with the scientific, commercial, industrial and nationalist revolutions of recent centuries in Western Europe.

The reduction of the percentage of the population that lives in poverty has been made possible by the economic growth that has accompanied extension of the market. The great conversion to a free contract, open market system was the dominant factor in a centuries-long war on poverty. It meant striking off the bonds that held some people in subservient status, restricted opportunity to a select few, and saddled paternalistic responsibilities on others. This "opening up" of society was part of a general rationalization and stimulation of new technological opportunities which enabled rapid expansion in production and consumption.

The basic policy toward poverty in 17th- and 18th-century England included free contract, a cautious extension of education and the suffrage, work-relief for the able-bodied poor, and work-houses for the infirm. And this was the heritage of colonial America wherein, except for slaves, individualism was nourished without restraints from a feudalistic past, where an independent peasantry opened the frontiers, where the pactice of free contracting for labor resisted visions of paternalism.

British practice had reflected a curious combination of market and premarket thinking demonstrated in the Poor Laws of 1531 and 1601, the 1662 Law of Settlement and

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Removal and the 1795 Speenhamland system of minimum-income allowances. On the one hand they declared that no able-bodied person should be granted relief. On the other, they discouraged such a person from leaving his parish to find work. While the labor market was becoming national, the central government dealt with beggars, rogues, ruffians and vagabonds by beating their backs until bloody and returning them to their place of settlement wherein the paternalistic ethic of feudalism was expected to come into play. If necessary, the parish could set them on work-relief or, as in the case of Speenhamland, supplement wages to a minimum standard related to family size.

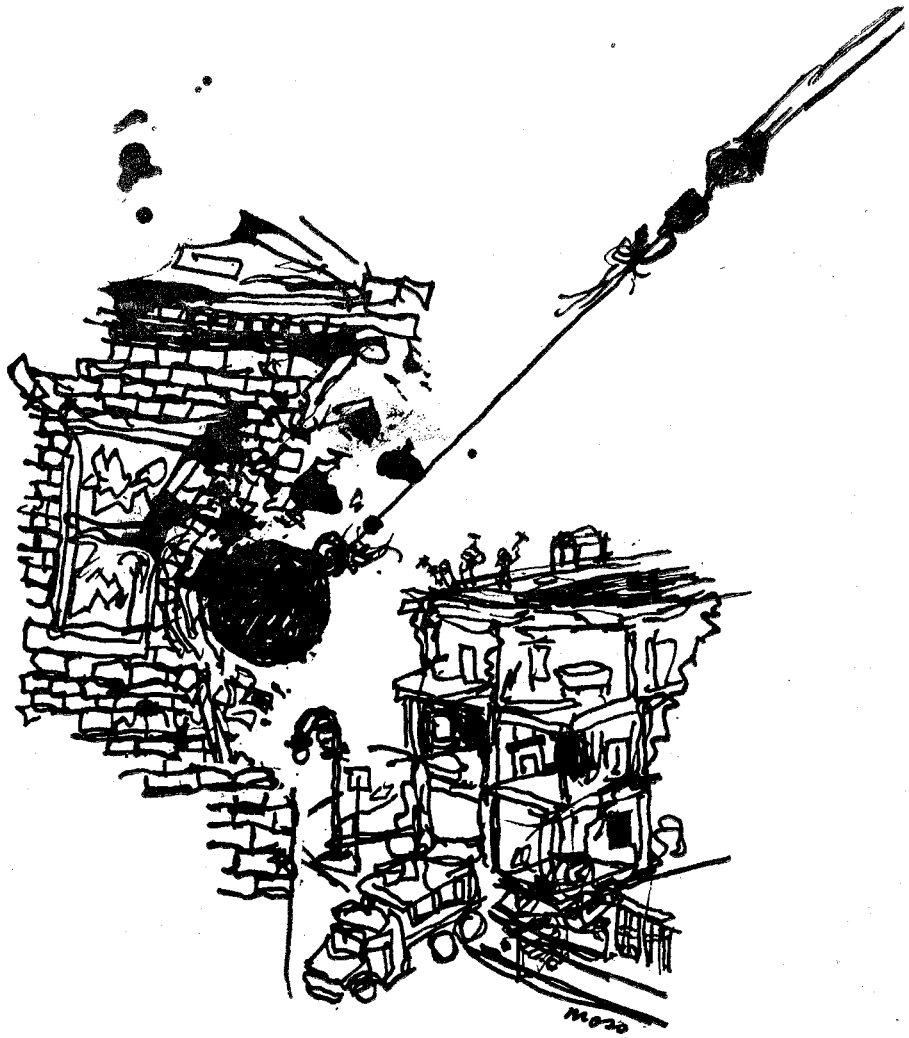
While the Poor Laws strongly discouraged pauperism and dependency, that was not the full story. Provision was also made for those unable to work. The aged were settled in cottages on the waste, children were apprenticed, and workhouses, orphanages, asylums and alms houses were maintained. Many other schemes for dealing with the poor were in the air in early 19th-century England. Bentham favored Houses of Industry which would improve upon John Cary's Corporation of the Poor in Bristol by aiming to reform and rehabilitate the poor while alleviating their distress. He favored special efforts to conserve and rescue the children of paupers. He saw the need for education and health care, assistance and insurance and cooperative actions on the part of the self-maintaining poor. It is doubtful that any of our present ideas about the poor would have seemed novel to Bentham's circle.

A wide variety of efforts have been and are still being made in America to move people out of poverty, to prevent retreat into poverty, and to meet the needs of the poor. These can be summarized under four categories:

(1) *Make the system work.* From the outset, American governments have played a strong role in determining the structure and operation of the private economy. They have functioned not only as rule makers but also as active promoters of business. They have affected the pattern of land use, the system of transport and communication and the advance of science and technology. Governments have been active suppliers of health and education services. They have sought to control and minimize fluctuations in the business cycle. The trend has been toward more governmental action to make the system work.

(2) *Adapt the system to the needs of the poor.* Historically the adaptation of the system has been enwrapped in the extension of suffrage and the development of a common citizenship. The most spectacular example of such adaptation is abolition of slavery, but less dramatically the courts and legislatures are constantly modifying rights and obligations which bear upon the opportunities and security of the poor. The law of property, of torts and of contracts, as well as the criminal law, are relevant. They touch basic matters of family responsibility and employer liability and regulate transactions between buyer and seller, landlord and renter, debtor and creditor. An early example of a move to balance rights and obligations in favor of the poor is the mechanics' lien laws; later examples are bankruptcy and usury laws, industrial safety codes, pure food and drug legislation, railroad and utility regulation, housing ordinances, the regulation of employment exchanges, and anti-discrimination laws.

Regulation of the labor market by permitting, and later by encouraging, collective bargaining and by limiting individual bargaining on such matters as child labor, minimum wages and maximum hours of



The articles in this "round table" discussion of poverty, by Robert J. Lampman, Herman P. Miller, Margaret S. Gordon and Eveline M. Burns, are based on papers which they presented along with other participants at a faculty seminar on poverty called recently by the Institute of Government and Public Affairs, University of California, under the direction of Dr. Werner Z. Hirsch. The article by Leon H. Keyserling was a separate assignment.

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work are frequently justified as measures to meet the needs of the poor. So too are price maintenance and agricultural price supports. Other adaptations of the system to the needs of the poor are social insurance and a shift from regressive to progressive taxation. Immigration policy was particularly cited by 19th- and early 20th-century observers as a cause of poverty, not only because many of the immigrants were poor but because, it was alleged, they pulled down the wages of all.

(3) *Adapt the poor to the system.* Two overlapping attempts have been made to renovate the poor: by changing their attitudes, values, motivations and life style, and by developing their potential productivity.

Schools, churches, "friendly visitors" from charitable organizations, professional social workers, volunteers in settlement houses, newspapers, labor unions and others have sought to induce change in the poor. In many cases this was attempted by transplanting middle-class values and the Protestant ethic in such terms that morality and personal salvation were associated with economic success. The poor were exhorted to practice thrift, temperance, prudence and self-discipline; to be mobile and "go west." Homeless children, wandering girls and vagrants were counseled and in some cases assisted to seek new environments and regular employment. The new scientific philanthropy of the 1890s involved case-work methods for helping the poor find a way back to independence through rehabilitation, adjustment, family services, medical care and inspirational example.

A different emphasis employs broad services for the whole community of the poor. These include schools, libraries, informational services, hospitals, maternal and child clinics, nurseries, public housing, recreational facilities, sanitary and other environmental improvements. In some cases this approach has meant extending generally available services; in others it has required especially modified services related to distinctive needs. Some of these public services have not only been "offered" but compelled, as in the case of school attendance.

(4) *Relieve the distress of the poor.* This strategy has often been thought of as the residual one, although in some formulations of the problem it is either complementary or alternative to the others. The distinction between public assistance and social insurance is becoming less clear, and there are several live proposals for "minimum income guarantees" and "comprehensive social security plans." The fourth strategy should not, therefore, be considered a relic. It may be the weapon of the future in the poverty war.

The American history of poverty may be interpreted as an alternating interest in and experiment with the four strategies. If the early 19th century was a time of special attention to strategy number 1 (making the system work), a later part of that century was the time for strategy number 3 (changing the poor). Number 2 (adapting the system to the poor) was emphasized in the early part of the 20th century and again in the 1930s. Numbers 1 and 4 (relieving distress) were the dominant strategies of the 1930s and numbers 1 and 3 have had big billing in the 1950s and 1960s.

The Economic Opportunity Act stresses strategy number 3. However, there is broad authority in the act for the director of the Office of Economic Opportunity to "assist the President in coordinating the anti-poverty efforts of all Federal agencies," and this may well involve a review of what is being done to advance the other three strategies. In his coordinating role the director may function as counselor or lobbyist for the poor within the Executive branch of the government.

A full-fledged anti-poverty program must take account of all four strategies, but decisions about how to allocate any given amounts of resources and leadership can best be made according to comparative measurement of how each of the several strategies will "pay off" in terms of reducing the per cent of persons in poverty.

While the classical economists were not an unduly optimistic lot, they believed that poverty would at least not be increased by a market system. But somewhere along the way the idea that poverty could be abolished gained currency. This hope must have been based upon observation of progress, though there are few studies of the scope of poverty. In 1798, Bentham guessed that in England "the multitude included under the denomination of the poor compose the bulk of the community — nineteen twentieths might perhaps be found to belong to that class." Less than a century later, in 1890, Charles Booth estimated that 30 per cent of Londoners lived in poverty. At the same time (1892), Jacob Riis estimated that from 20 to 30 per cent of the population in New York City was impoverished, and in 1904, Robert Hunter placed 10 to 20 million (12 to 24 per cent) of all Americans in that category. The staff director of the Industrial Commission investigation reported in 1916 that he thought from one-third to one-half of all wage earnings were "inadequate."

In 1902, Sidney Webb had said he thought it was sheer fantasy to believe that anything short of complete communism could abolish poverty. However, in 1909, David Lloyd George presented his budget to Parliament with the declaration that "this is a war budget for raising money to wage implacable warfare against poverty and squalidness. I cannot help believing that before this generation has passed away, we shall have advanced a great step towards that good time when poverty and the degradation which always follow in its camp, will be as remote to the people of this country as the wolves which once infested its forests."

Similarly, bright hopes were expressed on the American side in books entitled *Progress and Poverty* and *The Abolition of Poverty.* In 1910, Robert W. Bruere declared: "There is wealth enough in the world to make successful war on poverty." In 1914, Jacob H. Hollander asserted: "Now, in our own day, the conquest of poverty looms up as an economic possibility, definitely within our reach—if only society desires it sufficiently and will pay enough to achieve it." In 1928, Herbert Hoover concluded that we were nearer to the abolition of poverty and to the fear of want than humanity had ever reached before. By the present standard of $3,000 (1962 prices) income per family, almost half of America was poor at that time, and a rising percentage was poor in the early thirties. It was not until 1947 that by that measure

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less than a third of the population was impoverished. Using a different standard, Franklin D. Roosevelt in 1936 spoke of one-third of a nation as "ill-housed, ill-clad and ill-nourished," but said he foresaw a time when the lowest standards of living would be high above the subsistence level.

Poverty has been subject to many different definitions, but we have never come so close to an official definition as in the Johnson Administration. It is now important that a consensus be reached on that definition, so that experiment may proceed and predictive control may be advanced. Setting a poverty line is only part of the job; the other parts are selecting a yearly rate at which we want to move people across the line, and selecting a yearly rate at which we want to close the poverty income gap (i.e., the amount by which the total income of all the poor falls short of $3,000 multiplied by the number of poor families. That gap is now about $12 billion). Neither of these two parts of the goal has yet been specified by the Administration.

President Johnson, by restating a long-held American conviction that poverty is unnecessary, by declaring a determination to abolish it, and by indicating willingness to experiment with new variants of old strategies, has opened what may well be the most significant period in America's history of efforts to overcome economic insufficiency and economic insecurity.

Who Are the Poor? . . . . . Herman P. Miller

When the Council of Economic Advisers made its study of poverty several years ago, it established a cash income of less than $3,000 (1962 value) as the poverty line for families of two or more persons, and an income of less than $1,500 for persons living alone. The figures were criticized for failing to take account of such factors as size of family, age of the family head and farm residence. Early this year new statistics prepared by the Department of Health, Education and Welfare made rough adjustments for these factors. The new poverty line was flexible and ranged from about $1,000 for an elderly person living alone on a farm to more than $5,000 for a family of seven persons. Value of goods and services obtained without specific payment by farm families was also taken into account. The Spartan nature of this standard is suggested by the fact that the assumed requirement of $3,130 for a nonfarm family of four persons permits a daily expenditure per person of 70c for food and $1.40 for all other needs—housing, medical care, transportation, etc.

On the basis of the new figures, about 34.5 million persons in 1963 were subsisting at a level below the minimum budget. They constituted nearly one-fifth (18 per cent) of all persons in the United States. About 5 million lived alone; 30 million were in family groups. One-half of the 30 million were children. Here follow some key facts about families living in poverty:

(1) The 7 million families and 5 million persons living alone in 1963 received an aggregate income that was about $12 billion below their estimated minimum requirements. This figure — the poverty gap—is, according to Census Bureau figures, about 3 per cent of the national cash income.

(2) About 2 million families without a father account for about one-fourth of the poor and nearly half of the poverty gap. At a cost of about $5 billion, all families headed by women could be provided with incomes sufficient to meet minimum requirements.

(3) About 2 million families (one-fourth of all the poor) were headed by a person who worked full time throughout the year. This figure dramatizes the fact that low wages are still a major cause of poverty in the United States.

Increases in aggregate demand and a full-employment economy probably would not benefit these families, except perhaps by providing work for wives, many of whom are already overburdened with large families.

(4) About 1.5 million family heads worked at full-time jobs, but

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did not work throughout the year. The poverty of these families is attributable to a combination of low wage rates and periods of idleness occasioned largely by unemployment or illness. Although today's poor are frequently presented as psychologically or spiritually handicapped, the fact is that about 50 per cent of them are headed by a full-time worker whose wages are simply too low to support a family.

(5) Official estimates show that about 2 million (about 25 per cent) of the poor families are non-white (the non-white population of the country is 11.8 per cent of the total). These figures, however, understate the dynamic role of non-whites (Negroes) in the drive against poverty. The non-whites constitute about one-third of the non-aged poor and a much larger proportion of the chronically poor. One can therefore understand why the Negro has played such a major part in shaping the new anti-poverty program with its focus on education, training and rehabilitation, rather than money handouts.

(6) Original estimates published by the Council of Economic Advisers showed that the aged were the major group among the poor, accounting for about one-third of the total. From the revised figures it appears that the aged constitute only about one-fifth of the total.

Although poverty remains an urgent national problem, we have been whittling away at it and have reason to be optimistic about the future. Using the Council of Economic Advisers' $3,000 poverty line, between 1947 and 1963 the families in poverty dropped from 32 per cent to 19 per cent (in 1962 dollars). In other words, during this sixteen-year period we moved 40 per cent of the way toward the complete eradication of poverty. Between 1947 and 1956, the proportion dropped from 32 per cent to 23 per cent, a rate of one percentage point per year. There was no change between 1956 and 1958, but since that time the proportion has dropped from 23 per cent to 19 per cent, or just under one percentage point per year.

The maintenance of a constant rate in the reduction of poverty in recent years is no inconsiderable accomplishment. It was easier to reduce the poverty percentage when a third of the families were below the poverty line than it is at present when fewer than one-fifth are in that category. Furthermore, the closer we get to the very bottom of the income distribution, the more we encounter the hard-core poor whose incomes largely come from outside the labor market and are not necessarily responsive to the nation's economic growth. Finally, although economic growth tends to reduce poverty by pushing families above the poverty line, it also tends to increase it in a statistical sense by making it possible for the young and the old to maintain their own homes, thereby creating low-income families by fission. Despite these obstacles, poverty continued to drop at the rate of 1 per cent per year throughout the postwar period.

Measures of fluctuations in the incidence of poverty that extend back to the prewar period require the use of subsistence budgets. Subsistence must be thought of not as starvation but as a minimum adequate level of living for this society. Such a budget would provide the least amount that is compatible with the maintenance of a family's health, efficiency and social acceptability.

Estimates of changes in the proportion of families with incomes below the subsistence budget for various periods during the past twenty-five years have been prepared by Dr. Ruth Mack of the Institute of Public Administration. She found that in 1935 the cost of a subsistence budget (measured in 1962 dollars), as subsistence was defined in that year, was $1,700 and that 28 per cent of the families had incomes below that amount. In 1960, the cost of a subsistence budget (measured in 1962 dollars), as subsistence was defined in that year, had risen to $2,400 but only 10 per cent of the families had incomes below that amount. These figures show what most Americans know to be true. More people in the United States are living better than ever before and the proportion living at the lowest levels has been reduced most dramatically. Despite the progress, however, large numbers of families in the United States are still living in what we consider to be abject poverty for this society. It is the goal of the attack on poverty to eradicate the causes of such poverty and eventually eliminate it completely.

Failures of Unemployment Insurance

Margaret S. Gordon

It is now more than seven years since the annual average unemployment rate in the United States has dropped below 5 per cent. During those years we have moved slowly toward a national policy of combating unemployment through a combination of measures aimed at stimulating aggregate demand and promoting labor market adjustment, but we have done very little to overcome the glaring inadequacies in our system of income maintenance for the unemployed. By neglecting this area, we have failed to prevent millions of families and individuals from falling below the poverty line at one time or another since 1957.

On the basis of present data, it is not easy to state accurately how much of the poverty in the United States is attributable to unemployment experienced by the family breadwinner. In any case, the answer would vary from year to year with changes in the level of unemployment. However, a report recently published by the Social Security Administration suggests that nearly a fifth of the families and about an eighth of the individuals with incomes too low for bare subsistence in 1963, owed their poverty to involuntary unemployment.

The low incomes of the unemployed are attributable in part to low unemployment insurance bene-

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fits and the limited duration of those benefits. But many Americans do not realize that large numbers of unemployed persons cannot qualify for any type of public income maintenance payments.

Although the situation varies somewhat from state to state, approximately two-fifths of the labor force and more than a fifth of all wage and salary workers are excluded from the federal-state unemployment insurance system. Moreover, many of those who need protection the most are among the uncovered. These include nearly all farm and domestic workers, many workers in small firms, a substantial proportion of state and local government employees and employees of nonprofit institutions.

Although most state laws aim at providing, for those covered, benefits equal to 50 per cent of a worker's previous earnings, the ceiling on benefits brings the actual payments received well below 50 per cent in a large proportion of cases. Such ceilings, or maxima, have become *more* rather than *less* restrictive over the years, because, although legislative action raises them from time to time, the increases have failed to keep pace with the rise in wage levels. Largely as a result of this growing discrepancy, average weekly benefits have declined from 42 per cent of average weekly earnings in 1938 to about 35 per cent in recent years.

An unfortunate aspect of the relative lowering of benefit ceilings has been the severe impact on heads of families, whose earnings are likely to be higher than those of single beneficiaries and secondary wage earners. If federal provisions were to require states to raise their maxima gradually to two-thirds of the average weekly earnings of *all* workers (while retaining a benefit standard of 50 per cent of the *individual's* weekly earnings), male family heads would chiefly benefit. Such a provision was embodied in legislation submitted to Congress by the Kennedy administration and is likely to be included in anticipated Johnson Administration proposals.

The fact that male family heads would gain most from an increase in unemployment compensation standards is an important consideration in the light of recent evidence that children—and, among them, the children of the unemployed—constitute a larger proportion of impoverished persons than had previously been thought. This new evidence also lends support to proposals for a modified negative income tax, which would restore perhaps 14 per cent of the gap between a substandard income and a national minimum standard. Such a program would make a modest contribution to the income of impoverished families and would benefit particularly those with large numbers of children.

Although there are arguments in favor of such a scheme, it is no substitute for a more adequate system of income maintenance for the unemployed or for major improvements in other aspects of our existing social security system. It would be most unfortunate if the installation of a negative income tax were to hold back needed improvements in existing programs —a likely result, in view of the heavy costs involved.

In this connection, it is important to remember that unemployment insurance, inadequate as it is, has been a significant and quick-acting means of maintaining purchasing power during recessions. The negative income tax would be far less effective in this respect.

One of the disturbing aspects of our unemployment problem in the last seven years has been the amount of long-term unemployment. Those unemployed for fifteen weeks or more comprised less than a seventh of the unemployed on an annual average basis in the early 1950s; they have accounted for more than a fourth of the unemployed in the years since 1957. In the last few years, moreover, about half of the long-term unemployed have been out of work twenty-seven weeks or more.

It is this latter group that suffers from the fact that the maximum duration of benefits under

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most state unemployment insurance laws is twenty-six weeks. In both the 1957-58 and 1960-61 recessions, Congress extended the duration of unemployment insurance benefits on a temporary basis, but there has been increasing recognition of the need for a permanent federally financed system of extended benefits, along the lines of the provisions included in the 1963 Kennedy administration proposals. Under this type of provision, a worker who had been unemployed for twenty-six weeks would be eligible for up to twenty-six additional weeks of benefits, but only if his employment record showed substantial participation in the labor force.

There has been much criticism of the unemployment insurance system on the ground that married women who work sporadically, and other workers with loose labor-force attachments, have qualified for benefits. It is important to emphasize that such individuals would typically *not* qualify for extended benefits under the 1963 proposals.

One of the obstacles to achieving these needed improvements in unemployment insurance has been our almost exclusive reliance on an employer payroll tax to finance the scheme. In this, our American system is unique. Almost all other countries that maintain unemployment insurance finance the program by employer, employee and government contributions, or by some combination of two of these three. Since employer payroll taxes are set chiefly at the state level, and since unemployment insurance costs vary from state to state (largely because of wide differences in unemployment rates), strong employer resistance to increased state payroll taxes that would raise their labor costs in relation to those of competitors in other states is altogether to be expected. The problem would exist with or without the added complication of experience rating, which is deeply imbedded in our financing system and probably here to stay. Although substantial changes in our system of financing unemployment insurance are unlikely, there is no reason why at least the federal portion of the existing payroll tax, which would increase from 0.4 to about 0.7 per cent if a system of federal extended benefits and other improvements

were adopted, should not be shared among employers, employees and general government revenues.*

What protection does our public-assistance system provide for an unemployed worker who has exhausted his insurance benefits or was not eligible for them in the first place? There is probably more confusion and misinformation on this point than on almost any issue of public policy in the United States. The popular belief is that most unemployed workers who cannot get unemployment compensation promptly go to the welfare office and start collecting relief checks.

In fact, our public-assistance provisions until recently were such that in many parts of the country relief was either unavailable to the unemployed worker or was available only on the most meager, restrictive and humiliating terms. Partly for this reason, and partly because the typical American worker has a deep aversion to "going on welfare," the proportion of the unemployed receiving relief payments has tended to be very small. A nation-wide survey in the 1957-58 recession showed that the proportion who went on relief rose gradually from none of the families whose heads were unemployed from one to four weeks to 8 per cent of the families whose heads were idle twenty-seven or more weeks.

Our policies toward relief show many vestiges of the notion that it is dangerous to provide aid to able-bodied persons lest they become content to live slothfully on these "handouts." By contrast, many other advanced industrial countries have unemployment assistance or some other type of public assistance that is quite generally available to unemployed workers who have exhausted their insurance benefits or were ineligible for them in the first place. And the extremely low unemployment rates prevailing in many of these countries, for example, West Germany and Sweden, are convincing evidence that in modern industrial societies most workers strongly prefer the increasingly, satisfying level of living that is available to those who *work*, as compared to the meager level of consumption provided by relief.

Under the public assistance pro-

*Since this was written, the President has delivered a message that includes the following proposals:

- Federally financed benefits up to an additional 26 weeks for unemployed who have exhausted their original insurance, provided they qualify by having worked 26 weeks in the state base period and 78 weeks in the previous three years.
- Equalization grants for states with high benefits costs.
- Extension of coverage to employees of very small firms, nonprofit organizations and certain farm workers.
- A federal general revenue contribution equal to 0.15 per cent of covered payroll and an additional employer tax to meet extended benefits and other costs.

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visions of our Social Security Act, federal grants-in-aid to the states are available only for certain categories of needy persons; and until 1961, these did not include the unemployed, who had to fall back on general assistance, which was financed by the states, by the counties or by some combination of the two, and was generally a good deal more meager than the federally aided categories of assistance. A 1959 study showed that twenty-three states had no general assistance for the unemployed and their families, while elsewhere the means test was typically so severe that a person had to be practically destitute to qualify.

In 1961, Congress, on a temporary basis, extended federal grants for the Aid to Dependent Children program to the families of unemployed parents, and in the Public Welfare Amendments of 1962, these provisions were extended for another five years or until 1967. However, by no means all the states have taken advantage of these provisions, and the total number of families receiving such aid has been small. Moreover, these provisions do not meet the problem of the unemployed worker without minor children. Thus, they do little to help older unemployed workers, who are particularly susceptible to long-term unemployment.

If we are genuinely serious about our intention to move forward with a vigorous anti-poverty program in the United States, we shall need to emphasize, at one and the same time, national policies which stimulate the growth of the economy and affect the distribution of income, and more locally oriented training and job corps programs, such as those authorized by the existing Economic Opportunity Act. But we must also recognize that certain approaches, e.g., liberalization of income-maintenance policies, will immediately improve the lot of the poor; whereas others, such as certain types of reforms in our educational system, may yield results only in the long run.

The Poor Need Money . . . . . Eveline M. Burns

To judge by recent social policies, the cure for poverty is thought to be a matter of creating more jobs and equipping people to fill them.

But examination of the composition of the poverty population raises doubts about the potential impact of this approach. The social security studies show that 5.2 million of them are 65 or over, many thousands are disabled, and there are 5.7 million children whose breadwinner was fully employed throughout 1963.

Included among the poor are nearly 8 million recipients of public assistance. Because of their personal characteristics few of this group are likely to benefit from expanded job opportunities. In 1963, just over 2 million of them were aged, their average age being 76. Almost half a million were permanently or totally disabled. Nearly 100,000 were blind. Almost 4 million, including nearly 3 million children, were recipients of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC). The vast majority of these families with children under 18 were headed by a woman. With only one adult in the home, and with day-care centers or homemaker services unavailable in most parts

of the country, most of the mothers would find it difficult to hold full-time jobs, even if jobs were available for which they were adequately trained.

Less is known about the characteristics of the remaining 800,000 to 900,000 recipients of general assistance, but such evidence as we have suggests that only a minority of them are employable.

For these millions of poor families who are neither employed, nor capable of or available for work, our social security programs are, in theory, the bulwark against poverty. But in practice they do not serve. Coverage of even our most comprehensive social insurance program (OASDI) is still less than 100 per cent; unemployment insurance and workmen's compensation are considerably more exclusive. Workers in only four states and in railroad employment are protected by social insurance against loss of income due to temporary disability. There is no public health insurance to prevent people from being pushed down into poverty by heavy medical expenses or untreated disabilities. Public assistance programs often contain restrictive eligibility conditions that deny aid to obviously needy people or have very narrow definitions of need. In some parts of the country general relief programs, to all intents and purposes, do not exist.

Even if social insurance coverage were extended and if all needy people had access to public assistance, many would still be left in poverty because of the low level of payments under many of these programs. Few people realize how shockingly low are the payments received by the 7.5 million to 8 million people who at any given time are supported by public assistance. In principle these payments represent the difference between the amount of the applicant's own resources (and usually those of any legally responsible relatives) and the cost of the minimum income standard set by the state. These crucial standards are in most cases below, often far below, the poverty level. Welfare Commissioner Dumpson recently testified that the welfare grants in the state

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of New York "are generally admitted to be 25 per cent below the poverty level"—and New York is among the more liberal states. In January, 1963, the monthly cost standard of basic needs for an aged couple fell below the current poverty level in thirty-three states.

The showing in the AFDC program, currently the source of income for more than 4 million people, has been even more miserable. For a family of four headed by a woman the current poverty standard would require a monthly income of $260. Only three states set their minimum budgets at, or above, this level. For the country as a whole the median AFDC standard for such a family was $203; in several states it was approximately $150.

But only nineteen states actually make payments sufficient to bring all eligible AFDC families up to their own excessively modest minimums. The others set dollar maximums on the payments to any one family, regardless of size or needs, or, for fiscal reasons, pay only a percentage of the sum that elaborate investigation has shown to be needed. Such reductions are often considerable. The highest monthly amount payable to a four-person family headed by a woman is less than 50 per cent of the standard for basic needs (as defined by the state) in nine states; it is less than 60 per cent in thirteen. The record for the adult categories is less disgraceful, but even there the same policies are found in some states.

There are, however, serious obstacles to making public assistance payments more adequate. The programs are essentially controlled by the states and in the case of general assistance, often by the localities. Despite generous federal aid (amounting in the aggregate to 60 per cent of the costs of all programs except general assistance) the relative poverty of many of the states themselves precludes any significant increase of monthly payments — especially since the poorer the state the larger is likely to be the proportion of its population living below the poverty level.

But it is more than a matter of fiscal incapacity. Social attitudes play an important role. Disapproval of the welfare recipient in general expresses itself in shabby and demeaning treatment, and in low assistance payments. Thus, some very prosperous states — Delaware, for example—regularly make payments that are below the already low national averages. Even more significant, AFDC, the program most in public disfavor because of the large proportion of broken homes and out-of-wedlock children among its caseload, distributes monthly payments per recipient that currently average only $31, as against $60 for the disabled, $62 for the aged and $75 for the blind, excluding payments for medical care.

In general, payments under social insurance programs are more liberal. Yet on the OASDI program two-thirds of the retired couples receive less than $158 a month, the average for an aged couple being $130. The Federal Advisory Council on Social Security has recently recommended a new benefit scale that would yield a worker earning $200 a month a retirement benefit of $152 for himself and his wife, an amount almost equal to the poverty standard of $155. Even this increase would leave a sizable fraction of the aged below the poverty line, especially the large proportion of widows, who receive only 82.5 per cent of their spouse's single benefit. Even under the council's proposals, the poverty standard would be reached by a widow only if her husband had been earning more than $400 a month.

One obstacle to making OASDI a more effective instrument for eliminating poverty is the fact that the system has a second and, to some people, a more important objective: to insure retirement incomes considerably above the poverty minimum to the majority of workers who normally earn much more than poverty wages. Hence, increases in benefits at the lower end of the scale are always accompanied by increases at the upper end. This may lead to an allocation of an altogether disproportionate share of available funds to support of the aged and justify assertions that in the main our social welfare policies benefit the comfortably off, rather than the poor. Certainly, the disproportion between the income maintenance and welfare expenditures (other than education) devoted to the old, as compared to the young, is a sad commentary on our professed national concern for children.

Our accumulated knowledge of the characteristics of the poor and of the obstacles to making further significant impact on the poverty of the non-employables by liberalizing public income maintenance systems have stimulated exploration of other methods of attack. To the extent that poverty is due to low wages, minimum-wage legislation with wider coverage and minimums clearly above the poverty level are indicated. But equally important would be efforts to move workers out of low-wage employment, and for this end education and training programs should not be limited to the unemployed but made available also to those with jobs.

To the extent that poverty is due to family size, a system of children's allowances would help. Most modern countries have adopted systems whereby payments are made, usually to the mother, in some proportion to the number of children in the family and regardless of its income and resources.

Objections to allowances for children on the ground that payments go to families who don't need them are met with the assertion that by appropriate modifications of the dependents' exemptions in the income tax system, the net position of the rich can be unchanged, or even worsened. And proponents stress that only by making the children's allowance available as an unquestioned right will many needy but proud and self-respecting people claim the benefit. Fear that such a system would accelerate the birth rate cannot be supported by any clear evidence, and Canada's experience suggests that the effects are minimal.

A final line of attack on the large family as a cause of poverty is, indeed, a positive birth-control policy. This involves not merely making information, contraceptive devices and physicians' services freely available; it also involves counseling and work with the very poor to heighten their motivation to limit their families.

The children's allowance expresses the philosophy that people as people are entitled to a minimum income. Two other proposals would apply this philosophy to the entire population. The Negative or Reverse Income Tax proposal would require everyone to file a return of anticipated income. Those whose

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incomes fell below a specified level would receive all, or some fraction of the deficiency in the form of a payment from the government.

More far-reaching, but administratively more simple, are proposals that would make payments equal to the poverty level to everyone. Taxes would be paid on income and earnings in excess of this amount. As compared with the Negative Income Tax this approach would have the advantage of avoiding the problems created in any year in which actual income fell below anticipated income.

Both sets of proposals must face the problem of incentive. Yet before they are dismissed for this reason, certain points must be remembered. Our knowledge of incentives as they affect the kinds and amounts of work people do is still embryonic and largely folklore, especially in a country where the incentive gap between the poverty level and the income that can be secured by working is wide, and where advertising stimulates the desire for more income.

Further, if as some fear automation should drastically reduce the number of workers needed to produce the desired volume of output, assurance of some minimum income, regardless of an individual's contribution to production, may become inevitable.

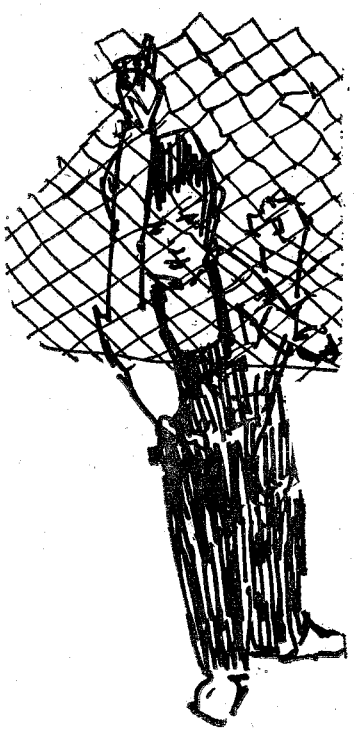
Nor is the probable cost of such proposals necessarily an insuperable objection. To some extent, such payments would eliminate the necessity for other income-maintenance expenditures. Unless there were a serious impact on incentive, their major effect would probably by redistributional, and how much redistribution of a given volume of national product shall take place is a question of social attitudes rather than economics. In any case, America must face the fact that any successful attack on the problem of poverty will require expenditures on a scale vastly greater than those contemplated under existing programs.

Poverty and the Economy . . . Leon H. Keyserling

President Johnson's "war against poverty" is eliciting the broadest national response, and this consensus is both a tribute to the President and the people, and an inestimable asset if properly used. But a pressing question is whether the soldiers in this war can be very effective if the generals have fallen short in their analysis of the causes of poverty, and if consequently their entire strategy is not only inadequate in size and scope (which some say might be remedied in time) but also substantially misdirected. Believing this to be the situation, I shall concentrate here upon some of the pervasive misconceptions.

"A high rate of economic growth is not the prime weapon to be used against poverty."

The supposition that we can reduce poverty at acceptable speed, without a rate of economic growth high enough to achieve the reasonably full use of our rapidly advancing technology and rapidly growing labor force, was first popularized by Professor Galbraith. His argument was that we were already so productive that we could do the job by allocating available productive resources more intelligently and humanely. But this argument overlooks the empirical observation that every country, whatever its economic system, has experienced a high correlation between the rate at which production per capita is increased and the rate at which poverty is reduced. This relationship also holds for the United States, and despite our current productivity the increases in private goods and services required to lift the 34 million Americans now living in poverty (and about an equal number living in deprivation) to an acceptable American standard of living — plus the increases in public services required toward the same ends, plus the whole range of our other domestic and international needs—make essential a high and sustained economic growth rate. Even if this were not so, large inroads against poverty and deprivation without high economic growth would imply redistributive programs so immense that politically they would be entirely unattainable.



Somewhat more sophisticated than Professor Galbraith's position is the claim that high and sustained economic growth cannot be intimately related to the war against poverty, since "the fine growth record of the past four years or so seems to have by-passed the poor." The answer is that, measured against a growth rate that might be expected to reduce unemployed resources to tolerable levels, ours has remained sorely deficient. Recent and prospective growth rates are less than half what would be required to reduce unemployment to acceptable levels even by 1967. Indeed, the record of the most recent years is one of the best proofs that adequate economic growth is

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the first condition for an acceptable reduction of poverty.

Then it is argued that about 27 per cent of our 34 million poor are beyond the age of gainful employment and would thus not be helped by accelerated economic growth. But to achieve and maintain adequate economic growth, we shall have to raise consumption more nearly to the productive potential of the labor force and the new technology; and to do that, we must rapidly expand the consumption by the poor, including those too old to work and those too young to work. Thus, the programs required for high and sustained economic

growth, for full employment, and for optimum progress in the war against poverty are really the same program.

"Excessive unemployment is not very clearly connected with poverty."

The most prevalent phrasing of this error points out that there are about 9 million poor families in the United States but only about 2 million families whose heads are unemployed. But the true level of unemployment is about 60 per cent higher than the official figures seem to indicate, because these do not include the full-time equivalent of part-time unemployment, nor the unemployment concealed by the fact that a persistent scarcity of jobs prevents many potential workers from entering the labor force. Also, about three times as many people are unemployed for three months or longer during the year as are unemployed at the time of any official count, and this in itself vastly increases the numbers who are dragged below the poverty ceiling by unemployment. More important, excessive unemployment is the prime index of a generally deficient economic performance that seriously retards the rate of income improvement among the poor who are employed. When properly analyzed, close to two-thirds of the poverty in the United States is directly connected with a deficient overall economic performance, of which excessive unemployment is the most important single manifestation.

"Greatly improved income distribution is not essential to the war against poverty."

This argument is that we are now able through economic growth to bake an economic pie so large that the poor will be sufficiently helped even if the slices are not shared out more equitably. But even if this were true, we can neither achieve nor maintain this growth without progressive changes in income distribution that would be in sharp contrast to the regressive trends now palpably in progress and aggravated by some important national economic policies, including the tax and monetary policies. A bigger and better pie is not feasible if too much sugar and not enough flour are used. Equally important, while there are excellent reasons why we should not seek equalitarianism in income distribution, poverty is in part, although not primarily, a relative concept, and social justice should be an integral element in economic performance. And there are large segments of the population, including the old, who can be helped to attain an American standard of living only by assigning them much larger shares of the national income than they now receive.

"Sufficient increases in aggregate demand can solve the problem."

Even those who admit the essential identity of inadequate growth, excessive unemployment and the intolerably slow reduction of poverty (and they are far too few) are inclined to rely upon increases in aggregate demand or purchasing power to bring our resources into full use. They call this the modern fiscal theory, following the teachings of Lord Keynes, and point with pride to the massive tax reductions of 1964. But the United States economy has not suffered in recent years from an inadequate total purchasing power; the trouble is that its distribution has not been compatible with economic equilibrium at reasonably full employment of manpower and other productive resources. Relatively too much income and other incentives have flowed to those who invest privately in the plant and equipment which add to our productive capabilities, and relatively too little (of both private consumer and government outlays) has flowed toward the expansion of demand for ultimate products. Massive tax reductions, which compete with expansion of public outlays, and which disproportionately benefit corporate investors and high-income individuals who save for investment a relatively large part of their after-tax incomes, work against both economic equilibrium and plain justice.

It is far too early to endorse the extravagant claims made for the tax cuts of 1964. If $11 billion or so had been thrown into the streets, the ensuing scramble would have had some immediate effect upon the economy. The point is that alternative uses of the same sum would have done more for economic growth, more to reduce poverty, and more to serve the great priorities of our national needs. And this is not crying over spilt milk: further tax reduction is now in process.

A second reason why an orgy of tax reduction is no substitute for adequate increases in public outlays lies in automation and the new technology. Putting more money into the hands of consumers to spend for automobiles, consumer durables, food and clothing is indeed desirable (at least in the case of the poor and deprived) although there are better ways of doing this than the methods used in 1964. But the government and private observers estimate convincingly that we shall need to create 22 to 27 million new jobs over the next ten years, and augmenting consumer demand for the above types of products will accomplish relatively little toward net expansion of employment. Technology and productivity in these particular areas are advancing much faster than any realistic projection of the demand for their products could match, even assuming that consumers have the money to spend. The only way to create the bulk of the 22 to 27 million jobs is to shift a much larger part

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of our productive resources into areas where the nation's needs are so great that the expansion of output can far outrun the advance of productivity and technology.

Outstanding opportunities in this context include replacing the slums in which at least a sixth of our people still live, renewing and rebuilding our decaying metropolitan areas, vast improvements (both of facilities and personnel) in education and health, conservation and replenishment of our national resources. Manifestly these efforts, *which are also most relevant to the war against poverty*, depend for their success not upon tax reduction but upon a vast increase of public outlays. This is called for particularly at the federal level, because the federal budget has lagged lamentably behind state and local outlays, which are financed in the main by methods far more regressive than those used to support the federal budget. Yet both the fiscal 1965 and 1966 federal budgets continue a trend toward lower federal outlays, when these are appropriately measured against total population and gross national product.

"Poverty and unemployment are due primarily to the personal characteristics of the victims."

I favor programs of training and education, perhaps larger and more systematic than those now in process. But neither experience nor reason supports the proposition that the *main* explanation of excessive poverty and unemployment, in an economy like ours, is to be found in the personal characteristics of the victims rather than in the deficiencies of the nation-wide economic and social policies under which they live. When one analyzes the composition of the poor and the unemployed, it becomes obvious that ten or more could be helped immediately by improvements in these policies, along the lines indicated above, for every one who could be helped immediately or even in the long run by highly personalized treatment. And even training and education must be coordinated with efforts to create jobs and other forms of economic opportunity, or to create income for those who cannot hold jobs. Lacking this concurrent process, we cannot know what to train and educate the people for, and when they get trained and educated they will become embittered because the jobs will not be there.

"Economic and social progress depends upon enlarging the 'consensus.'"

Progress in a democracy always depends upon wide popular support, but we misread our whole history if we jump from this truism to the conclusion that the needed amount of economic and social progress can be attained without a struggle, if we confuse the cliché that politics is the art of the practical with attempting to do only what enjoys the maximum "consensus" before it is done. The latter course, particularly when so large a proportion of the population is affluent and complacent, and when the very nature of economic and social change requires jarring the real or fancied interests of many powerful groups, must result in bland efforts that bring the ceiling of so-called political feasibility far below the floor of what we must do to meet our needs.

"The war against poverty can be a highly specialized effort, led by a special agency."

There is perhaps nothing questionable about a special Office of Economic Opportunity, if the government adequately stresses, and the people fully understand, that this Office and the Economic Opportunity Act which it administers represent only a tiny fraction of a full-scale war against poverty. Even allowing for the coordinating functions of the OEO, it can hardly touch factors that are more important to this full-scale war than any it does touch: taxation, monetary policy, social security policy, farm policy, housing, credit, minimum wage, transportation and resource development, etc. It is no answer to insist that these policies are being executed at other points, and that evaluation of the total war against poverty must take account of what is being done in these other areas. For the very issue I raise is that these other policies do not focus upon a war against poverty —though in one sense that should be their primary focus — because the whole American economic problem is ultimately that the standard of living of about two-fifths of our people (the poor and the orphaned) is intolerably low when measured against our capabilities. The situation is aggravated when many of these other policies run substantially counter to what the war against poverty requires, and when others (medicare, housing, etc.), though moving in the right direction, are scaled at a dangerously slow pace.

"The war against poverty can be successful without much more national planning."

What I have said really boils down to the conclusion that the kind of war against poverty we should be waging requires much more planning and coordination at the national level than we have thus far been equipped or willing to undertake. The creation of a special agency to deal with the poverty problem, while not undesirable, in a larger sense reflects the *ad hoc* and improvised nature of all our basic national economic and social programs. This means not only that we are starting too slowly but also that in many respects we are off in the wrong direction. Under the Employment Act of 1946, we ought to be developing long-range goals for the pattern of our civilian labor force, with due regard for the priorities of our needs; for maximum production, which would take account of qualitative as well as quantitative factors; and for the distribution of purchasing power that would support these other ends. We should then be adjusting our national economic and social policies to these goals.

This degree of planning would not force the government into novel fields of activity, nor in itself would it change the balance of responsibility between private enterprise and government (although some changes in that balance may indeed be desirable). It would merely introduce into our national policies the degree of rational planning that is now commonplace in large business corporations. It would merely carry forward the express mandate of the Employment Act itself. And it would merely be a move toward that new balance of flexibility and decision, experimentalism and consistency, short-range response and long-range efforts which the free societies must develop if they are to maintain their position and leadership in the world.

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Monster With Melopoeia

TAKEN CARE OF: The Autobiography of Edith Sitwell. Atheneum Publishers. 239 pp. $5.95.

Denise Levertov

Taken Care Of, the autobiography of Edith Sitwell, would seem to be of clinical interest only (except to gossips) as a record of the largely paranoic ramblings of a poor old woman blighted by a most horrible childhood, if it did not contain a few pages that show the one peculiar good that managed to develop in this warped being.

Edith Sitwell appears to me to have been a monster, in a quite strict sense—"any plant or animal of abnormal shape or structure, as one greatly malformed or lacking some parts." But her ability to distinguish the affective properties of verbal sounds—the logic of melopoeia—was developed to a most extraordinary degree. This faculty is in itself a valuable phenomenon, and she was able to transmit its findings to her readers in some of her poems and in much of her critical writing, such as *A Poet's Notebook*, *A Notebook on William Shakespeare*, a book on Pope, some of her notes for *The Atlantic Book of British and American Poetry*, etc. But an autobiography asks the reader to look at the author as a human being; and it is hideous, shocking, painful, to witness the degree to which this one gift of hers was unaccompanied by any proportionate presence of other related properties. Pages 28-31, 39-46, 142-144, 168-169 (and an occasional sentence elsewhere) contain those passages of technical analysis which will be valuable to any poet and to most serious readers. An example: "From the thin, glittering, occasionally shadowed, airy, ever varying texture of that miracle of poetry" [*The Rape of the Lock*] the instinct was instilled into me that not only structure, but also texture, are parents of rhythm in poetry, and that variations in speed are the result, not only of structure, but also of texture." She proceeds to develop this idea, in a passage too long to quote here. Or again, ". . . if you use one three-syllabled word, it has a greater speed than the three one-syllabled words which might have been used as its equivalent." This is Edith Sitwell the poet.

Denise Levertov, the poetry editor, will be on leave for the summer. During her absence no new poetry will be selected.

She had, as I've said, a horrible childhood. I cannot take her word for what her parents were really like, because it is simply not credible that the idiot she describes her father to have been could have written *Tales of My Native Village*, a book of great charm and interest—however much it may idealize the 13th century—but whatever their reality, her father and mother certainly failed to give their plain, precocious, ill-tempered daughter the most rudimentary sense of being loved. Moreover, she was, it seems, subjected to all sorts of ill-advised orthopedic tortures, designed to act variously on her back, ankles, feet, and—surely hardest to bear of all — her nose: ". . . a band of elastic surrounded my forehead, from which two pieces of steel (regulated by a lock and key system) descended on each side of the organ in question, with thick upholstered pads at the nostrils, turning my nose very firmly to the opposite way which Nature had intended, and blocking one nostril, so that breathing was difficult. This adornment . . . was worn only during my long hours in the schoolroom (unlike the other devices) as it was thought it might arouse some speculation—even, perhaps, indignation—in passers-by if worn in the outer world." Her nurse, her father's valet, a peacock (which later came to prefer the society of a peahen, to the poor child's grief), a puffin and an owl were the sole friends of her infancy, at least until her brothers were old enough to become her companions. A large *number* of friends is not a human necessity; but one cannot but feel sharply how *faintly* these particular relationships must have supplied love. Even the devotion and kindness of Davis, the nurse, must have fallen far short of the warmth so desperately needed.

Still it must be acknowledged with compassion that under the circumstances it is remarkable that Edith Sitwell made anything of her life at all. But compassion cannot give artistic interest to her unconscious revelations of her own warping. One sees how rejection by her parents made her defensive in a way that no doubt led to her eventual paranoia, but the actual displays of that result are only sad; and that strain of vulgarity in her that was so ready to scream "Vulgar!" at others is not quite accounted for, however charitable the reader wants to be, by an unhappy childhood: rather, by a lack of intelligence. For that exquisite sensibility to the sensuous and emotive qualities of English words must not be mistaken for general intelligence.

It must be added in fairness that this book was written when Edith Sitwell was ill, and completed shortly before her death. There are several minor instances of a certain confusion of thought. She even makes a startling and, to the reader of the early chapters, painfully pathetic reference to "the fun, liveliness and happiness" of her youth. The "ineffable happiness" she knew as a young child, in the vivid sense of nature's splendor she had then and knew intermittently throughout her life, can hardly be described as "fun"! She makes only bare allusion to events that must have been of great importance to her development, or her failure to develop. Speaking of the deterioration of her friendship with Helen Rootham (the translator of Rimbaud's *Illuminations*), who had been her governess and with whom her first years of emancipation from parental domination—beginning only in her late twenties—had been spent, and spent apparently more happily than any other extended period of her life, she says: "But then, suddenly, *life rotted.*" (My italics.) She does go on to tell of Miss Rootham's psychological changes and to refer to her eventual illness and death—which was "very terrible"; but she does not give the reader more than a shadowy, and as if it were involuntary, hint, of whatever dreadful conflict justified, as no doubt it did, those words —"Life rotted."

She frequently inserts, among mean diatribes, disclaimers: "I trust that I have hurt nobody." "I have never,

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in all my life, been so odious as to regard myself as *superior* to any living being, human or animal." (Surely only someone who *does* feel superior feels a need to deny it! — and at the same time, what honest person can deny having *at some moments* in his life felt superior to some other being?) "In private life I am an exceedingly mild person." Etc. Yet literary battles—and slights—of long ago still roused her to a fury of malicious attack, always self-defensive, in which she describes her enemies as "squealing" and as being "floozies." "Were I not too kind to laugh at the cruel disappointment and envy suffered by certain poor little unsuccessful writers, I might be amused by the fact that although I am now 77 years of age, the unsuccessful are still thrown into what is practically an epileptic fit brought on by envy and malice at the mere mention of my name," she writes. And the tragic, hopeless, bitter last lines of the book, in which she describes "a shrunken world of no horizons," visited only by the Norns in their full, unameliorated frightfulness, begin thus: "Outside my house there is still a little flurry of dust, the chatter of the people who still hope to intrude on me and rot my brain, as they have tried to do throughout my life."

The human poverty self-revealed in all but a few pages of *Taken Care Of* does, after all, throw light on an aspect of her work. Her later poems, with their tragic themes, obsessive symbols and seemingly compassionate point of view, have never moved me, as did the light, crisp, early work —which she herself describes precisely as showing in some poems, "a violent exhilaration, [in others] a veiled melancholy, a sadness masked by gaiety." I see now—reading her words of cheap contempt for anyone who has criticized her, of vulgar self-praise, her passages of heavy sarcasm (in the style of Mrs. Wilfer in *Our Mutual Friend*)—that though she also had, in her fierce and loyal affection for a few persons and for many books, moments when she did envision "the warmth of love that makes all men brothers" (she is alluding to her wartime poems), it must have remained largely a theoretical experience, which was not only constantly at variance with the spite and pettiness in her but was also a projection that helped prevent her from acknowledgment of that spite. All the world's evil comes from "them"; "they" are the crucifiers; Edith Sitwell identifies consistently with the poor, the long-suffering, the crucified. It is this that, quite naturally, makes the later poems seem false, lacking in the very depth they seem to claim so fervently for themselves. They are overextended, and any such overextension inevitably shows up in the language and rhythm, the very substance, of a poem.

This is not true of the grim "Lullaby"—

'Though the world has slipped and gone,
Sounds my loud discordant cry
Like the steel bird's song on high:
"Still one thing is left—the Bone!"
Then out danced the Babioun . . .'

That rings true, clangs with the dull unresonating tone of agony. But when, for instance, in "Dirge for the New Sunrise (August 6, 1945)" she wrote:

'Bound to my heart as Ixion to the wheel,
Nailed to my heart as the Thief upon the Cross,
I hang between our Christ and the gap where the world was lost
And watch the phantom Sun in Famine Street,'

but then continued, a few stanzas later:

'But I saw the little Ant-men as they ran
Carrying the world's weight of the world's filth
And the filth in the heart of Man'—

something has gone wrong, to my ear. A rhetoric is masking with its extraneous riches a thinness of substance, and the substance is thin because the total person is not really backing the words. I'm not saying that any artist's vision of nobility must at all times be supported by impeccably noble behavior in his day-to-day life!—but that no artist can accuse the human race of its sins while reserving himself from full implication in them, and still move us deeply. We are moved at a deep level only by words that come from a deep level; we are moved only partially by words that express only a partial involvement of their author; when such partial involvement, partial realization, seems to claim for itself a totality, an omniscience, we are moved to a lesser degree than we would be if the partiality were admitted.

Such poems, examined carefully, can be instructive, especially in our present phase of "Camp" art, with its terror of "sincerity." Edith Sitwell was certainly not consciously "insincere." Nevertheless, her art was compartmentalized; she didn't back it up with her human totality of emotions and intelligence. It remained an outgrowth of her monstrous sensibility. Therefore as long as it dealt with expressions of sensibility, as in the early work, it satisfies; it is an operation of its own universe of discourse. But when in her latter years she pressed forward ("sincerely") into the realm of morals, of eschatology, of absolutes, it fails *in its very language and rhythms*, because the necessary blood supply, as it were, is denied it.

Perhaps those contemporary artists who squirm at the very idea of sincerity, of earnestness, are failing to distinguish adequately between the conscious sincerity which in its very single-mindedness tends to deny the terrifying multiple possibilities of each individual, and which is therefore not enough to sustain life in a work of art — a sincerity which is indeed a form of hypocrisy — and the largely unconscious, all-embracing sincerity of great artists whose whole being stands doggedly in back of their work.

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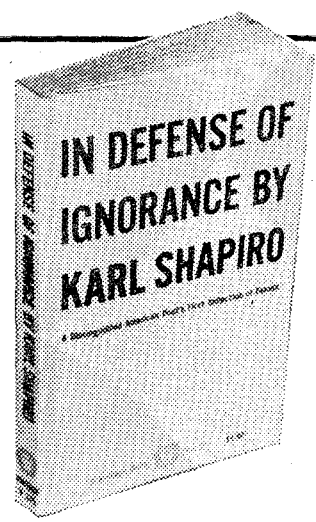

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The View from the West Side

TWELVE CHASES ON WEST NINETY-NINTH STREET. By Roy Bongartz. Houghton Mifflin Co. 243 pp. $4.95.

Eve Merriam

A few years ago I was searching for a new apartment, and as every follower of Manhattan real estate listings knows, it is cheaper to live on the West Side than on the East, and the higher up you go on the West Side the lower the rents become. My search, therefore, led me past the West Sixties of remodeled brownstones with chartreuse front doors, past the older apple-strudel accents and newer fag-waving of the Seventies, past the TV discount stores and pastrami cathedrals of the Eighties, into the Nineties with its cluster of movie houses and billboard graffiti (*Tony Fisher and Miss Zoplin. Luis estavo aqui. Maria loves Lefty.*), and finally to the corner of 99th Street and West End Avenue. There I found an apartment on a high floor with a river view and a tolerable rent.

There was only one thing wrong. The Puerto Rican superintendent asked if I had children. "Then don't take it," he advised. "This building, okay, but across the way, no okay." I peered out the window. The building on the opposite corner looked identical to the one we were in, but the super pointed out that it had been turned into an S.R.O. Although it is only in the show-business world that S.R.O. means standing room only, that could well be the definition for single-room occupancy, since such places are almost always crowded to overflowing with both human and vermin populations. To get rid of roaches or gouging landlords would be only the beginning of a reform campaign. This particular building across the street was a heroin hangout; the super told me that he and the supers of the two other "clean" corner houses had sent a petition to Mayor Wagner to come on a personal inspection tour. Had there been any response from City Hall? The super grinned and gestured that I must be on the stuff myself if I thought they would get any action now. When Mayor Wagner had been campaigning the previous summer, he had gone to 106th Street and West End and there had been a clean-up of that southeast corner. But the campaign was over.

"You want your children go to park, lady, you make sure they go by 98th Street or 100th. Not here."

This striping effect of good blocks and bad has become more and more common; in many instances, the striping has become solid shading. Short of hiring a helicopter for transport, I didn't see how I could get my children into the safe apartment in the safe building without passing some part of the unsafe block. So I continued my onward and upward search, and it may be that Roy Bongartz took over the place I was too chicken to rent. Certainly one gets the feeling in reading these dozen stories that the author knows his geography.

For West Siders like myself, there is an *in* quality to the book: real neighborhood names, real neighborhood sounds and sights and smells; it is a sensate world that Bongartz gives us, and he is a splendid writer, loose-jointed, supple. The reader becomes an active participant immediately: "On the 300 block of West Ninety-Ninth Street, the residents chase each other up and down the steep hill that rises from the Drive to West End Avenue, and then, between chases, they rest, and sit on the front stoops or lean out of their windows and passively absorb the chaotic racket and motion of dogs, children, cats, fire engines, police cars, garbage trucks, moving vans, blocked and klaxoning cars, and rusty-wheeled grocery carts. Beat-up two-toned cars with North Carolina plates and cracked safety glass in the side windows park in broken brown-bottle glass. Everything is cracked, knocked in, busted on West Ninety-Ninth. Two buildings on opposite sides of the street in the middle of the block are Negro rooming houses, one high-class and one low-class. The other buildings on the block exclude Negroes but are open to examples of all the other groups that exist." And further on the noises of the block are separated out for us: ". . . the clatters and tinkles

Eve Merriam is the author of After Nora Slammed the Door *(World) and* Figleaf: The Business of Being in Fashion *(Lippincott).*

Into Summer

Some days ago, to stop the leaping
weeds, on both sides of the path
workmen scorched these fields.
A short time after, as he passed
the charcoal-velvety, zigzag tracks,
he smelt the strange blend of the
burnt and the growing.

But now,
just over the black, something flags,
green flicked here and there,
but mostly a transparent papery
brown, like stubborn ghosts, caught
in the fire and yet come through,
nodding as though to say, "This is
as much as we can do."

And he who
tried to pierce the classroom tedium,
to move his students to a grove,
a clearing where the green remains,
recalls some struggled into words,
then fallen back, eyes flickering
a second as though caught with sun.

And they, like one's best hopes
and feeling, singed yet wrangling
through, knowing nothing but the need
to go on, into summer?

Soon,
of their own greed and by the tangle
of numbers, the weeds will do
what the greasy fire was meant to.

But now each must heed the music
mumbling in him—in some crazy way,
on top of the brown, green sticks out,
and a whitish, tiny kind of flower—
that strange blend of the burnt
and the growing.

Theodore Weiss

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of kicked tin cans and banged garbage lids and smashed wine bottles that echoed along the buildings that walled the deep, narrow street. An outraged woman's voice pierced through in disturbing, imminent clarity. . . ."

The interior scenes are also drawn with exacting and effective detail. The contents of a house awaiting the steel ball of demolition: "Its red bricks had gone greenish, a five-story walkup with its opaque windows either Xed in slashes of whitewash or smashed out. The building looked dead and blind . . . the battery of dented mailboxes . . . the stairway was covered with a faded orange linoleum, and the walls had a crinkly surface of parkbench green. In one apartment, tops of plastic containers, hunks of foam rubber cushion, a portable hair drier with a torn plastic head cover, a dented-in, rusted air conditioner. . . . In another, an Empire State Building paperweight, a metal jigger with a handle shaped like a naked woman." And the refrigerator offerings of a bachelor's abandoned apartment: "soda bottles, rusty openers, a can of dried-up tomato juice, a plastic lemon-juice lemon, a can of rat poison, and ice trays full of gray water."

Bongartz also ticks off in Pop art inventory the appurtenances of a West Side bachelor's going concern: "a hi-fi, a flash camera, a slide projector, a tape recorder, a battery operated miniature fan, an electric shoe polisher, a foot-long bottle-cap opener, and a set of ashtrays that looked like dice."

City people in city places in city seasons: spring and fall are correctly missing, for flowering and harvest play no part in this concrete life. Bongartz therefore gives us the steamy subway ride of summer, and outdoors "the muggy air, hot sun glaring through layers of haze upon the softening asphalt and baked concrete." The chief character in Bongartz's stories is Benny, a past-40 bachelor who works as a parking-lot operator; as a true citynik, when summer comes he dreams of floor fans and ice cubes; in winter, of an armchair and dry slippers. After work on a blizzardy day, "as Benny splashed his way down the subway stairs, whose gratings were dripping brackish water melted from thousands of boots and shoes, he felt his socks sodden between his toes. He wedged himself into an IRT local, among steaming scarves and slippery plastic coats and wet hats, the air hot and palpable above his head."

Benny's vis-à-vis is Flo, waitress at the Crosstown Bar on 96th Street, and each of the stories is linked to the next by the simple plot device: will Benny or won't Benny make out with Flo? Chunky Benny, skinny Flo: there is much humor in the stories, much sympathy; and when I read the first of these episodes in *The New Yorker*, a year or so ago, I felt the excitement of coming upon an authentic new city voice, and I could hardly wait for the next installment to appear. Now that these twelve stories have been bound together as a book, I feel cheated.

What is it that has gone wrong? The city weather is right; the street scenes and interior scenes are right —all the realistic touches, yes; reality, no: the sum of the stories adds up to less than the individual parts. I think what is wrong is that this fictional West Ninety-Ninth Street has turned into a curiously sanitized neighborhood: there is no dog shit and no dope. I am not asking for another *Last Exit To Brooklyn*, but it does seem to me an extraordinary glossing-over of the facts of life to ignore all mention of drug traffic in writing about an area that contains so large a proportion of the nation's addicts. For all the skill of the stories, therefore, they read a little as though they are designed to win Mayor Wagner's Status Quo Award.

Furthermore, in all of Bongartz's stories people are kindly to one another beyond belief. Not only are all racial, religious, economic and cultural barriers broken down; they don't seem to exist in the first place. The old are kind to the young, white to black, cop to drunk, shopkeeper to customer, boss to employee. (Is there no more reviling on the Upper West Side? I find it hard to believe that nastiness of disposition ends at Columbus Circle.)

In the first installment that Bongartz offers (the title story of the book), a Negro falls down and a white woman immediately comes to his aid, while a moment later a white cop solicitously inquires, "How do you feel, buddy?" In another installment, two 10-year-old Puerto Rican girls insist on dragging a strange white man home to their aunt, and the aunt sweetly explains that the youngsters have wanted to find a match for her. Even in a musical comedy, I don't think this episode would hold.

In another example of the miraculously good life on West Ninety-Ninth, a superintendent paints a tenant's apartment long before it is due, a careless assistant burns the place up, and the tenant is saddened but not vigorously vocal. In yet another story, a worker invites his boss to a party (the boss comes), and later the boss invites him, and everybody is very pally. I think my favorite suspension of disbelief came while I was reading the story about Benny and Flo strolling along Riverside Drive near the boat basin of 79th Street and suddenly being invited by the owner of a palatial yacht to come aboard and have dinner. Even natural enmity is broken down on jolly West Ninety-Ninth Street as crabbed age and youth manage to live in tender togetherness.

One feels that Saroyan has given up riding his bike no-handed (Look, world, I'm dancing) and has switched to a motorcycle and is gunning along the 300 block of West Ninety-Ninth: zoom, zoom, get outa my way or I'm gonna love you, too.

Benny and Flo and lesser characters keep chasing in and out of one another's lives in a sort of perpetual block party. Benny almost gets Flo to stay over at his place time

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after interrupted time. It is made explicit that neither of them has any other love life, yet their unconsummated innocence continues. They reminded me of the joke about the two sailors looking at the windows of second-hand magazine stores on Sixth Avenue. "Come on," the first one urges, "let's go inside and buy some pornography." "But gee," says the other, "I haven't even got a pornograph." Both Benny and Flo are the second sailor.

Bongartz gives his book a conventional ending: boy can have girl but doesn't take her. It doesn't matter too much by this time, though, for we have become accustomed to the sound of Muzak in the city. As the last paragraph of the last story tells us, "People in New York go on forever. Nothing would be lost." And as Benny has observed just before this finale:

Manhattan people had no childhood . . . they lived only in the present, all of them of a certain permanent age. . . . Manhattan people were immortal. . . . Nothing could change the look of New York people. They were made one way and one way they stayed. Maybe if you shipped them away somewhere, to a scorching desert or a windswept mountaintop, it could work some change in them; then they might crumble up or flake away. But leave them in Manhattan, with their black lungs and blinky eyes and pocketfuls of subway tokens, and they remain reliably static, cast as if in living bronze. Thus there was no hope whatever for them, but at least you didn't have to worry that they would get any worse off.

Well, as Mayor Wagner told us all along, everything's going to turn out fine and besides it doesn't need to get any better, just stay as it is. And so, as the sun slowly sinks over the nonpolluted horizon of Manhattan, we bid a fond farewell to Benny and Flo.

Townscapes and Turnpikes

THE AMERICAN LANDSCAPE: A Critical View. By Ian Nairn. Random House. 152 pp. $5.95 cloth. $2.95 paper.

THE VIEW FROM THE ROAD. By Donald Appleyard, Kevin Lynch and John R. Myer. Massachusetts Institute of Technology Press. 64 pp. Illus. $15.

Frederick Gutheim

Ian Nairn has traveled about in the United States observing the physical disorder of our cities, and he has some constructive thoughts to offer those concerned with the preservation of natural beauty and the improvement of urban amenity. His main idea can be called "processional architecture." In the sequence of experiences as one moves about in cities, Nairn believes we can discover the prime element of design to which all of us respond. He also talks positively but persuasively about buildings and spaces, about landscaping and graphics, and in doing so he takes a great deal of the mystery out of the subject. An informal style, coupled with the author's own snapshots, are combined to address the general reader rather than the specialist. On the whole it is convincing—if something less than the entire story.

The author walks us around the Fine Arts Center at Wellesley College, the Southern California coast town of San Clemente, or the old water-front district of Savannah. We are shown just what is there to enjoy, why it is enjoyable, how it needs to be preserved and enhanced. There are also visits to Boston and Chicago, Newfane, Vermont and Wilkes Barre, Pa.; Washington, D.C., and San Antonio, Tex. Attention is concentrated upon the specific and the detailed. While formal architecture (the work of Pei, Saarinen, Rudolph, Nowicki, et al.) is not ignored, the stress is upon the vernacular and the nonarchitectural elements in the environment. Sound graphic design, street furniture, planting, shelters, paving, color—these are given emphasis. The disproportionately large damage caused by bad signs and wirescape is shown. What the author primarily illustrates is continuity.

Most of what is shown already exists, of course, and we should be concerned to save it. If it has discernible value, Nairn argues, then it can be controlled, separated from its surroundings, defined, related to other design strengths, given a pattern and assigned a useful part in the total "townscape," the chief value of which is to give identity to a given place.

Were it not for the paramount significance attached to the total environmental experience, all this emphasis upon detail might become precious. But the author is fully aware of this danger, and the success of his book is a measure of this recognition. Those who spend a couple of hours with it will learn to see differently, critically and constructively, the urban world that surrounds them.

Although the final chapter deals with the larger scale of the American autopia, with expressways and clover leafs, parking lots and roadsides, this is really a book written from the point of view of the pedestrian. Perhaps Nairn ought to write a second book on special pleasures and problems with automobiles. The usefulness of such a work is suggested by *The View from the Road*, a fresh look at the highway in urban design by a team of M.I.T. city planners.

Appleyard, Lynch and Myer have the same visual orientation that characterizes Nairn's book, but they are professionals and technicians, writing with the diffidence of scholars and addressing themselves to others of like interests. Still, anyone who drives a car will enjoy their efforts to dissect the visual experiences and pleasures of the highway and will hope they succeed in persuading the designers of highways to consider "the view from the road." Speed is a new dimension in urban aesthetics and the vast sprawl of a metropolis becomes unified in a continuous experience along the urban expressway once we know what to look for (or once a city is designed with these facts in mind). The authors are excited by the prospect that their analysis can be applied also to railroads or progressive forms of mass transportation and to the automated highway. Most of all they imply that we should be thinking of these factors when we further plan our extensive, national highway commitment.

If Ian Nairn is the pedestrian, looking for a highly structured and traditional city, the M.I.T. planners are boldly driving toward the more extensive future city with its new forms of transportation and movement, inspiring fresh experiences in urban aesthetics. Both are needed as the world enters upon the effort to conserve, rebuild and plan new cities which are in tune with contemporary life and ideas.

Frederick Gutheim is president of The Washington Center for Metropolitan Studies and has served on the Pennsylvania Avenue Advisory Council.

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ART

Max Kozloff

REVIEW OF THE SEASON

Throughout the year, one tries to write about art with as much indifference as possible to the publicity, polemics and folderol that surround it. Distractions emanating from the market place have rarely been the basis for judging art, while they quickly dissipate as influences conditioning its reception. But during a strutting moment this season, it looked as though all this would be reversed by an onslaught of public vulgarity that discolored and distorted aesthetic experiences. Authors who should have known better, and others who never could, unwittingly competed to create the likeness of a cynical, flatulent, *arriviste,* fashion-crazed art world. And yet, their own excitement about material success, covert admiration for confidence games, and above all, their conspicuous tenure within that world, compromised their moral indignation. It is worth talking about this because it blanketed the year with an ugly spirit that smothered a remarkable crystallization of sensibility.

The first account of this sensibility was Susan Sontag's discussion of the Camp phenomenon (*Partisan Review*, Autumn) in which she examined the contemporary nostalgia for exaggerated postures and lush effects, mated with an amoral and dehumanized approach to sensation. More provocative still was her article "Against Interpretation" (*Evergreen Review*, December): a recognition of modern art's willful opacity, and an exhortation to "cut back content so that we can see the thing at all." No less illuminating was Alan Kaprow on "the artist as a professional" (*Art News*, October), which exploded the heroic stance of traditional artistic "alienation" and reiterated the specialized, craftsmanly concerns of painters who, like other professionals, fulfill their role *in* society rather than act out any stereotype *against* it or its mores. What was significant about these articles was not that their ideas were unprecedented, or that they were acts of analysis, but that for the first time they more or less accurately reflected in words the attitudes of a whole young generation of artists.

At the same time, however, the pundits, press agents and disaffected littérateurs were fabricating an image of that generation as decadent and corrupt, imparting to it a glamour that they themselves could never match. In "The Art Establishment" (*Esquire*, January) Harold Rosenberg shortsightedly viewed the mechanics of trend setting and the hierarchies of power within the visual arts, not merely as mindless inexhaustible distortions of pictorial history but as an indictment of a sold-out scene.

On a lower level, a *Newsweek* cover story intimated that "art as a commodity threatens to defuse spiritual values"—though these values were not defined or examined. So pervasive was the alleged "comedy of acceptance" that viewings with alarms themselves turned embarrassingly hip and permissive. Eugenia Sheppard and Tom Wolfe, of the New York *Herald Tribune*, did more perhaps than any other journalists to popularize — while ambiguously condemning — something they didn't understand. Through puffery and piffle, the *Tribune* not only falsely opposed Pop and retinal art but promoted a Campy liaison between art and *haute couture* which *Vogue* and *Harper's Bazaar* gushingly continued. In short, uneasy with a situation in which their own values were possibly mocked, observers coyly contributed to, or gratuitously manufactured, the very vices they decried.

Much of this came about from a confusion between behavior at openings (or at independent film showings or discotheques), and works of art. Still, again, there was bewilderment about the aesthetic difference between ambiguity and evasiveness. The irony of banishing moral evaluations from current objects and sensations is little understood. But nothing was clearer than the flight of writers from the challenges of current art, and the attempt to discredit an *avant-garde* which, for once, was not suffering enough. Whether from vested interests or not, there issued a crass, double-standard Philistinism, that had no critical value whatsoever.

Behind its verbal lather, half concealed and half overexposed, was the guileless art of Andy Warhol. At this point, the possibility that his exhibition of innumerable silk-screened flower paintings may have contained even a smidgen of visual interest is academic. By inflating Warhol's mechanistic attitudes, in which the machine is an escape from any deliberate control, rather than inventively used or quoted in itself, his friends and enemies professed to derive from his work the archtypal expression of our *Zeitgeist*. But that there was only an opportunistic correlation between his images and the needs of copy-hungry editors was underlined by the fact that serious critics ignored him.

Warhol may have been in demand as a false whipping boy or gilded youth, but the year saw a suite of exhibitions whose provocation was as

Harper's magazine
JUNE

Inciting municipal jitters is his trade. Picket lines, boycotts, mass meetings are his tools. He provokes violent reactions wherever he goes . . .

He is **Saul Alinsky**

THE PROFESSIONAL RADICAL

This tough-minded agitator from Chicago has been waging his own kind of war on social evils for twenty years. He has been called a tool of the Catholic Church, damned as a dangerous revolutionary, hailed as a pioneer of effective community action—and he is now moving in on Rochester and other troubled New York communities. This is his own story excerpted from a tape recorded interview, exclusively for **Harper's Magazine.**

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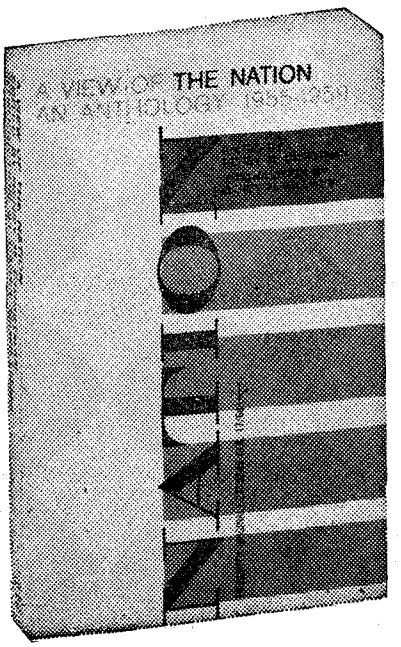

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genuine as was their relevance. These were the Duchamp, Lichtenstein, Saul, Dine, Kitaj, Rauschenberg and Rosenquist shows. They ranged from the spare ironies of the old French master, to a chromatic brilliance among the younger Americans that fed on, rather than aped, the commercial images which were their sources. In retrospect, the intellectual implications of the Duchamp retrospective outdistanced the limited enjoyment it gave at the time. There can be no doubt of his centrality in the creation of the Dada *demi-monde* which is present American art. One of the major principles formulated by Duchamp is not merely the extension of what might be thought of as "artistic" but the inclusion within this unpredictable domain of the spectator's responsibility to comprehend, shape or reject his experience himself. Time and again, Duchamp accomplishes this with such precision that it is transformed from sleight of hand into a consistent heuristic principle—only now being explored down the many paths Duchamp opened.

By now, it can be seen that Pop art is only one of the many current strainers of the Dada spirit, and that even Pop art itself is splitting up under the pressure of an abstraction similarly inspired by Dada. The beautiful new metal enameled explosions of Lichtenstein are abstract in function, if not in their absurd appearance. And Rosenquist's "F-111," perhaps the most stupendous public painting in this country since the old cycloramas, so magnifies the glittering or iridescent surfaces of industrial images that one is forced to read many of them as almost non-representational. This shift toward the abstract can be interpreted as Pop's abandonment of social meanings — equivocal as these were from the start—to a more intractable and self-contained vision. (Although the recent planned "happenings" of Pop artists at the First Theatre Rally: New York were by contrast, limp retrogression into amateur theatre.)

Overlooked for the most part are the advances that abstraction has been making on its own. They do not lend themselves to the slogans of press agents or even of gallery dealers. The most immediate link between abstract art and the work discussed above is the phenomenon identified by the Guggenheim Museum as "The Shaped Canvas." Two of its practitioners —

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Charles Hinman, with his biomorhically formed, high-intensity colored constructions, and the remarkable newcomer, Wil Insley (pictorial variations on the clover leaf)—demonstrate that abstraction can be redefined as both emblem and object simultaneously, the emphasis on either one thus being fruitfully lost in a new genre. To a considerable extent, Kenneth Noland (who was shown three times, and hence physically dominated the season) is moving into this area with his frequently extremely handsome diamond-shaped paintings. These have a startling, immediately visual impact that flusters the spectator, and yet heightens his notion of the expressiveness of simple, reductionist forms. However, when these forms are not enforced with color (as in some of the works at the "Form and Structure" exhibition at the Tibor di Nagy) the results can be extremely thin. On the other hand, when they are rumpled by obtrusive surfaces, they can be merely unpleasant, as at the Concrete-Expressionist show at New York University.

Generally speaking, an urge toward greater freedom and luminous expansion is making itself felt in American abstract art. If one compares the three-part Ad Reinhardt retrospective with the presence of the extremely young Larry Poons, the tendency becomes evident. While both are concerned with the problem of eliciting a retroactive color from extremely clear, geometric shapes, the older man will drown out contrasts with his gridded variations on one, usually dark hue, while the other, by his random but ebullient polka discs dancing on a radiant chromatic ground, differentiates a much greater spectrum of colors than he in fact has. Still closed and definite, hard and flat, abstract art is wandering fetchingly in format, as its color gamut becomes ever more optical.

As for Retinal Art itself, discussion on, and the influence of, "The Responsive Eye" at the Museum of Modern Art has waned considerably. Not so much because it contained a paucity of interesting work, as because it was trumped up, does it seem a pale ghost only one month later. While the museum made no pretense of creating history (only of reporting on a widespread technological flavor in recent art), it involuntarily overweighted the year by the prestige it can give any of its incursions into contemporary territory. That the public responded so avidly to this bogus *avant-garde* material only falsified the real issues.

What stands out of real promise and even merit during the period of 1964-65 is the accelerating maturity of sculpture. A list of names that includes not merely the old masters David Smith and Alexander Calder, but such of the present generation as Anthony Caro, David Weinrib, David von Schlegel, Mark di Suvero and Robert Hudson, is distinguished and multicolored. From the Jewish Museum, the Whitney and a host of galleries came an efflorescence of three-dimensional pieces that cut across, and often deepened, the many idioms that were once thought exclusively pictorial. In fact, the openness of the sculptural situation has in many ways inhibited any clear idea, or serious explanation, of its dynamic.

However, one aspect of this year's activity deserves censure. The volume of new work justifies wide representation, but not so wide as that of the piggish provinces of the *Biennales*, The Venice, the *Documenta*, the Pittsburgh, the Corcoran and now, shortly, the Sao Paulo affair, give a promiscuous and anarchic confusion to a scene that is already disparate beyond measure. Deprived of its dignity, packaged in nationalistic containers, art becomes, indeed, the commodity that only the vulgarians will hail.

But perhaps these omnibus bazaars highlight the real difficulty of even apprehending what is going on: art no longer obeys any of the ordered progressions that enabled its critics to classify it rather too neatly in the past. Since Manet, that is, pictorial activity seemed to organize itself by movements: Impressionism, Neo-Impressionism, Fauvism, Cubism, right on up to Abstract-Expressionism, which was the last and most eclectic. Once its precarious cohesion had been unraveled, no overarching creative principle has informed the succeeding, highly manneristic developments. What one has now is a totally polycentric, fragmented field of squirming idioms, obliquely infusing one another, but none of them gaining precedence or domination over the field. One result has been the rapid turnovers and insatiable metamorphoses (having strictly internal causes) that are misinterpreted only too willingly by outsiders as the materialist, modish corruption of art by an affluent society.

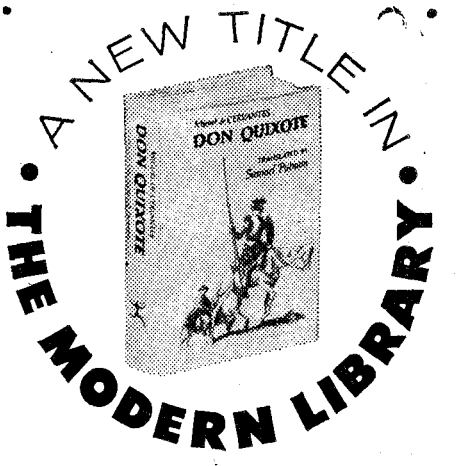
THEATRE

BAAL

The most difficult years in an artist's life come in the decade after his death. Unmaliciously, even unconsciously, fashion, segmentation and cult implacably enforce a second and final death—that of his art. Berthold Brecht died nine years ago. Fashion now puts printed signs on our stages, or lines lights about our proscenia. It narrates over loud speakers; it throws titles and slogans on screens; it projects slides. We call these already fossilized relics Brechtian.

But how are we, today, to know the real nature of the art these devices memorialize? There was a Brechtian school, but it was like that of Frank Lloyd Wright. The genius-leader gathering his *Bund* brooks no competition. When he is gone there remain only bereaved and leaderless followers — sponge-type intellectuals who had never found for themselves how much they had contributed to the leader's processes and how much they had leaned on him. After he is gone, they may ritualize or categorize or deify. But the cult rarely furthers, or even explains, his art.

Relatively few of Brecht's plays have been undertaken anywhere outside East Germany in the last decade. When they have been attempted, critics who knew Brecht's Berliner Ensemble have seen only glimmerings of the master. His theatre is not easily



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transferred into a repertory or into a contra-cultural style and attitude; it is not a cloak or a stance that can be donned or discarded at will. It is a way of theatrical life.

Brecht's plays have been successful in America only when they have been segmented or de-fanged. *The Threepenny Opera* ran for years—but in an "enjoyable" version, in which Mack the Knife's switch-blade protruded from its sheath only enough to scratch and tickle. We "liked the music." We found *Brecht on Brecht* more palatable than the plays. The few productions which have attempted to replicate Brecht's have not been successful, artistically or financially.

Therefore, Theodore Mann and Paul Bibin's decision to stage *Baal* at the Martinique is fortunate. Their choice is good primer Brecht, for America. It is closer to the American "Method" than Brecht's later "alienated" or "epic" plays. It embodies the *Angst* to which citified Americans are attuned these days. Being Brecht's own Goethe-esque *Young Werther*, and his Kafka-esque *Trial*, it is probably the easiest of his works for Americans to comprehend. (Our attitudes in the '60s are more akin to those of pre-World War I than post-World War I Germany—let alone to the Continent of post-World War II.

Brecht was 21 when he wrote *Baal* in 1918. It was his first play. He had just returned from service with the defeated German army. All Germany was reeling in disbelief at the disintegration of all that had been supposed indestructible and forever true. Not only their military but their civilization and their art and their culture had been shown up as fraudulent. And Brecht was a German poet who knew how fully the wracked culture had fed his soul. The writing of *Baal* became the first of a series of efforts to excoriate the spirit of Goethe and Schiller from his being. Brecht denied and denounced the possibility of individual moral choice in *this* world. His rage at cultural and personal romanticism was as great as his own inner compulsion to strain the limits of his human periphery toward the God-like.

In *Baal*, he undertook to mock religion and humanity and morality out of his being—to eviscerate the "heavy elephantiasis of conscience" as he put it. With Rimbaud he saw earth as infernal and viewed morality as a "weakness of the brain." With Büchner, he saw the defeat of the Gothic culture by the Gallic as individuality's death knell. Men would now become worker-ants.

A young folk poet, Baal moves among the intelligentsia in the cafés and the workers, among the moral and the immoral. But he is consistent in his human relations. He gives nothing; he only feeds. He fills his belly and uses his women. Then having drunk his fill of women, he will drink of men. He becomes his friend Ekart's lover. Having used Ekart, he kills him in a fit of lover's jealousy. Having used his own life, he dies. His final jealousy is leveled at the God-like—at the stars. Baal, mouthpiece of Brecht's own yearnings and agonies, has swilled in the gutter; he has soared to and fallen from the stars.

Forced, as he saw it, by intransigent history to discard his longed-for likeness to God, he fastened his German bent for religion upon personal animalism. The human body became

A Marriage

He leaves her sitting on the rock,
the child grown big inside her,
eyes tracing the paths of the
bubbles loosed by the waterfall.
He heads downstream, dancing
when the rocks give way under
him, pausing to flip coins
to the minnows who dart for them
as the sun licks the silver—
his mind free of her and of
anything.

After a while,
the rocks are too many and the
stream refuses to afford a
crossing place. She sees him
coming from a long way off,
moving methodically but still
joyful, scarlet riverflowers
jammed in his coatpocket and
she knows they're for her.

D. R. Hazelton

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VOICES OF COURAGE

—against McCarranism

Dissenting in the Supreme Court decision on the McCarran Internal Security Act (4-26-65)

Justice Black said:

"I think that among other things the Act is a bill of attainder; that it imposes cruel, unusual and savage punishments for thought, speech, writing, petition and assembly; and that it stigmatizes people for their beliefs, associations and views about politics, law and government.

"The Act has borrowed the worst features of old laws intended to put shackles on minds and bodies of men, to make them confess to crime, to make them miserable while in this country, and to make it a crime even to attempt to get out of it. It is difficult to find laws more thought-stifling than this one even in countries considered the most benighted.

"Previous efforts to have this Court pass on the constitutionality of the various provisions of this freedom-crushing law have met with frustration on one excuse or another. I protest against following this course again. My vote is to hear the case now and hold the law to be what I think it is—a wholesale denial of what I believe to be the constitutional heritage of every freedom-loving American."

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June 15

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Chairman American Committe for Protection of Foreign Born

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Brecht's real protagonist and hero—the amorally incoherent, animalistically assertive, ecstatic, enduring life force of raw, naked, muscled man.

For Brecht, life embodied the conflict between supermen fighting for their bodies' joys with the strength of savages against the impersonal, inpassionate agents of social usefulness. The animal hedonist is coward and rogue. He is likable, charming and sexually submissive. He is Baal; later he is MacHeath. He is not only passive, he is also masochistic because he can atone to himself for the God likeness he has lost only by wishing for and seeking his animal death.

The enemy of the rogue is the knave—the doer. The socially effective man is the implacable enemy of the animalistic. The Brechtian doer (as Peachum) is sadist. The knaves' sadism does battle with the rogues' masochism in Brecht's theatre, and the standard ending of his plays is the total victory of cruelty. The good is passive, masochistic — the bad is active, sadistic and victorious. Brecht knew his people and knew his time. He did not need to wait for the Nazis. He had already invented them.

Gladys Vaughan's direction of the Martinique *Baal* is, on the whole, perceptive and evocative. Since this is pre-abstract — even pre-Brechtian (as to systemology) Brecht — questions of empathy versus alienation were not immediately pertinent. (For Americans who are still at least vestigially puritanical, the voyeurism induced by its sexuality creates a sort of empathy Brecht would least desire.) James Earl Jones's Ekart is magnificently libidinal. But Mitchell Ryan's Baal falls short. Brecht's Baal needs to alternate on stage between the gross sensuality and licentiousness of the *Baal* of ancient Semitic legend, and the moral, socially aware man of conscience. Ryan is simply unable to evoke hedonism, unable to become stallion. Consequently Baal's duality is not adequately expressed. The *Baal* company (alternating in repertory with *Othello*) plays well in ensemble, and there are no weak performers in the supporting cast. Will Holt's direction of Stephen Wolpe's musical arrangements adds substantially to the mood and the flow. This is a staged work of which its producers and participants may be justly proud. It provides America with its first real opportunity to see a Brecht play done very much as Brecht would have it.

But *Baal* is the earliest, most American Brecht. When will we see, for example, *Saint Joan of the Stockyards*, presented not as a charade but as relevant social commentary? For Americans, there is no greater challenge over the entire theatrical spectrum than that of Brecht.

Brecht wanted from his actors all that Stanislavsky and Strasberg have wanted and, in addition, Brecht wanted them to fully understand and create a stage commentary upon the social meaning of the character and interaction they were portraying. This, coupled with his demand that the actor not engage the audience's empathy in such a way as to rob it of its intellectual objectivity, is the famous Brechtian "alienation." (In a sense it is "supra-theatre," but it is just as true to say that this alienation is nothing different from that innate to the Commedia dell'Arte. W. C. Fields, simultaneously creating and commenting upon the Bank Dick, exemplifies Brechtian "alienated" theatre.)

Brechtian commentary for an American audience would be attuned to our own culture; it could not possibly be equivalent to the commentary of the Berliner Ensemble. The current Greenwich Mews production of

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The Exception and the Rule illustrates the problem. It is "authentic" in that it tries faithfully to re-create what had been socially meaningful at another time in another place. It is un-Brechtian in that it does not expose and cauterize today's American exceptions and rules.

R. J. SCHROEDER

R. J. Schroeder is a free-lance writer on business management whose avocation is the theatre.

THE WIVES

Lionel Abel's *The Wives*, as directed by Herbert Machiz and designed by Leo B. Meyer at Stage 73, is handsome and witty, its proposition intelligently stated and the consequences thereof derived with punctilious craftsmanship. It is a pleasure, in this era of ruffian theatre, to be served by such scrupulous hosts and I am not much put off by the fact that the bouquet of Mr. Abel's wine is more refreshing than its body.

We find ourselves in ancient Greece, waiting with Herakles' wife and some gossips of the town for the hero's return from long absence on his labors. That we are also in suburbia is soon clear, for the chatter of the chorus has the brassy ring of the post-A&P coffee hour. Mr. Abel is saying, "it was ever thus," and he says it with a deft lack of emphasis that preserves the humor of the observation throughout the evening.

Deianeira (Anne Meacham) reveals that she quite dreads the coming reunion—marriage with Herakles has not flowered as richly as she had been led to expect by its first transports; indeed, he has seemed abstracted, even cold, during previous stays at home. The confession provokes hoots of fond derision from the attending ladies, who vie with one another to anatomize the swinish inconstancy and loutish insensitivity of their mates. Marriage is the death of love, as every smart girl knows, and cuckoldry the only recourse.

A herald arrives, and with him a princess seized by Herakles in his latest exploit. Quickly the shirt, drenched in the blood of the centaur Nessus, is despatched to the approaching hero, and when he enters, clad in its scarlet magic, he is in fever for Deianeira. The ladies are amused, rueful; they offer ironic congratulations. But the wife is not content. Herakles is bewitched: he knows his beloved but he does not know himself. She will have truth with her love, and the shirt must come off. Alas, Herakles grows confused; he addresses maudlin pleas to the slave girl. The shirt is brought forth a second, fatal, time. Now it burns and the hero dies. There remains only for Zeus to appear and explain that mortal experience cannot encompass both love and knowledge; it is overreaching to expect it and Olympus will intervene. As Herakles' foreign lieutenant has forewarned, duplicity hides in the clear light of Greece; put trust rather in misty hues that do not quite declare themselves.

There's a truth in that: deception by candor is one of the cruelest styles of fooling. But at its core, Mr. Abel's choice between warmth and wisdom seems to me a little demeaning. The allegation, so flatly made, that marriage wilts on consummation, and that what follows is a life of vengeful resignation is shallow and better suited to music-hall cynicism than to the author's powers of discrimination. And the fact that Deianeira may be thought to die in martyrdom to the contrary view does not rescue the thesis. The sacrifice is too great for so piffling a misapprehension. It could be that the playwright is mirroring, in his seductively amiable play, our poor opinion of ourselves. There would be duplicity in that.

Miss Meacham is lovely and appealing in distress; I wish she had been able to summon enough of the resolution of Attic womanhood to serve the play's masquerade of antiquity. Jon Cypher maintains a slight exaggeration of gesture and response that evokes the intimidating dimensions of semi-divinity.

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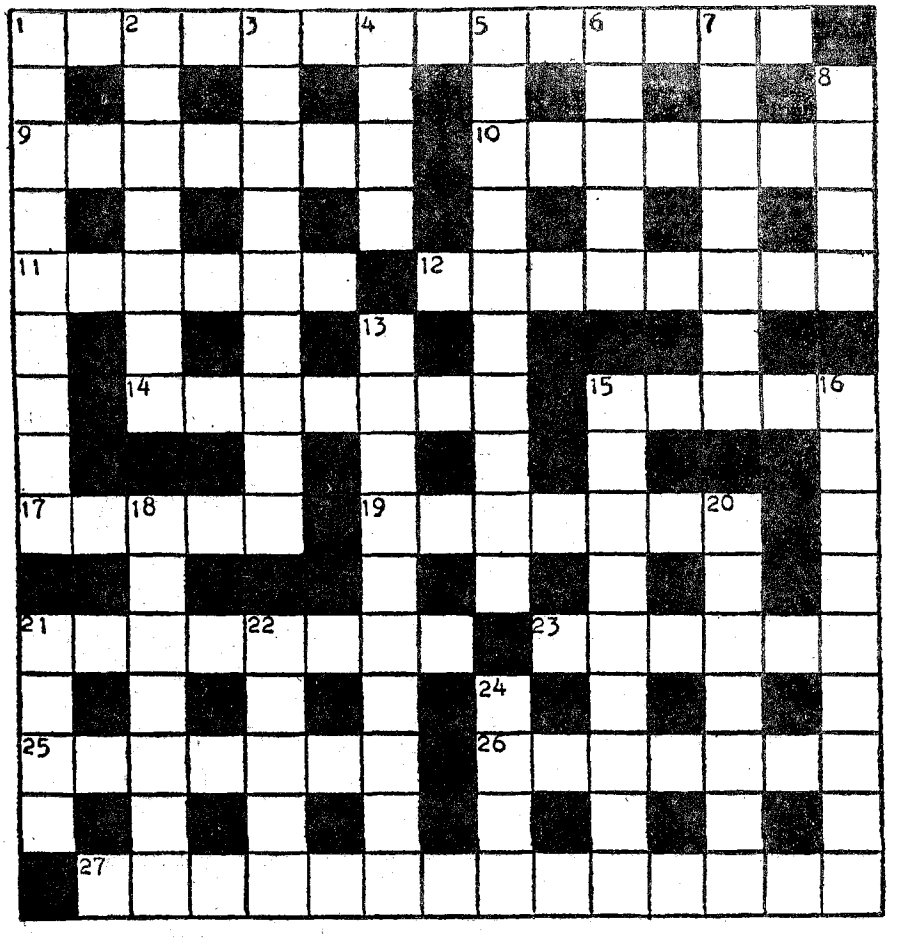
Crossword Puzzle No. 1109

By FRANK W. LEWIS



ACROSS:

1 Constructing obstacles that lead to nursery pile-ons. (8, 6)
9 It certainly isn't the old that get left in the city. (7)
10 An outgrowth of the clan, yet a dormant characteristic. (7)
11 The end of 9 in Manchuria. (6)
12 Do, and you might create a craze for the far-out type. (8)
14 and 21 down A pose to dodge, but easy to shoot. (7, 4)
15 Not everyone is pleased with such a boom in aviation. (5)
17 Jack sounds as though he ought to be in church! (5)
19 A killer would give little weight to such an unpleasant matter. (7)
21 Made a hundred with little trouble, due to teaching. (9)
23 See 4 down
25 Would such remarks be expected in the garden, or in the operating theater? (7)
26 Sought a quiet refuge, but her auto was wrecked in the process. (7)
27 The best-laid plans might be made by it. (14)

DOWN:

1 Not the judge's stamp of approval, though it might fix your position.
2 Where politicians might be active doesn't imply a good turn-out. (7)
3 But it wasn't Eliza who raided the city. (9)
4 and 23 across Is it so remarkable to observe an old person of merit?
5 Might one expect to find a B.A. garbling such material? (10)
6 The nerve of some people, when it comes to looks! (5)
7 How to make a ruler fix what should be hit first. (7)
8 One of the British isles? (4)
13 Does it sometimes take a second band to make the wedding a success? (10)
15 No Junior, one must wait a year to be! (9)
16 Might be a bar to growth of the plant. (9)
18 One might hear you make a raid out of this. (7)
20 Rather hurt about the expression of childish petulance. (2, 5)
21 See 14 across
22 Might one eat off it in the country? (5)
24 Crack down, or perhaps cracked up. (4)

SOLUTION TO PUZZLE NO. 1108

ACROSS: 9 and 10 Drug store; 12 Pullman; 13 Tousled; 15 Sentence; 16, 18 and 1 Sudden storms are soon over; 21 and 24 The age of consent; 26 Offered; 28 and 11 Fail-safe; 29 and 30 Undersell; 31 Going steady. DOWN: 2 Regulator; 3 Sustain; 4 Oboe; 5 Ocelots; 6. Eases; 7 Drouse; 8 Effete; 14 Death; 17 Digressed; 19 Thorax; 20 Sunburn; 22 Enforce; 23 O'Neill; 25 Salvo; 27 Odes.

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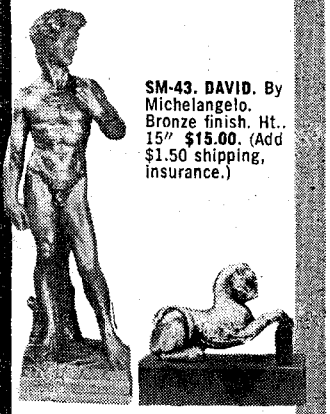


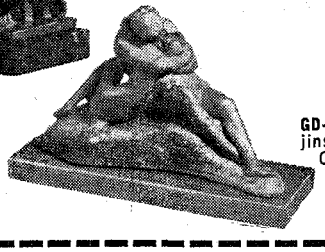
SM-43. DAVID. By Michelangelo. Bronze finish. Ht., 15" **$15.00.** (Add $1.50 shipping, insurance.)

MFA-6. DANCING WOMAN. Etruscan, 525-500 B.C Original in bronze Museum of Fine Arts, Boston Ht.: 6" **$15.** (Add $1.00 shipping, insurance.)

PR-1 PANTHER. Persia, 2nd Century B.C. Princeton University. Original in silver Replica in metal. Ht., 2¼" **$5.00.** (Add 60¢ shipping, insurance.)

BZ-1. HEAD OF A PROPHET. By Ben-Zion (American Contemporary). Gilt-bronze finish on black base. Ht.: 7½". **$15.00.** (Add $1.00 shipping, insurance.)

ST-100. MOSES. By Michelangelo. Original in bronze, after the marble statue in the Church of San Pietro in Vincoli, Rome. From a private collection. Ht.: 8¾" On marble base. **$12.50.** (Add $1 50 shipping, insurance.)



GD-4. EMBRACE. By Gleb W. Derujinsky (American Contemporary). Original of green patina bronze. Mounted on mahogany base Length 7½", height 4½". **$15.** (Add $1.00 shipping, insurance.)

BA-6. THE THINKER. By Auguste Rodin (French, 1840-1917). Reduction from heroic size bronze original in the Baltimore Museum of Art. Ht.: 12½" **$37.50.** (Shipping—express collect.)

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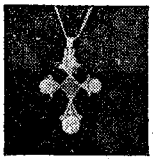

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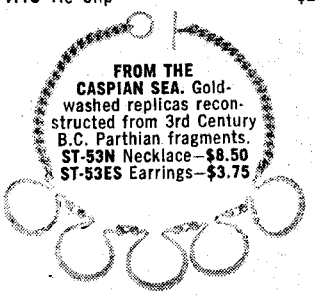

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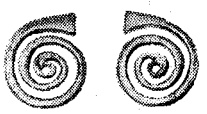

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